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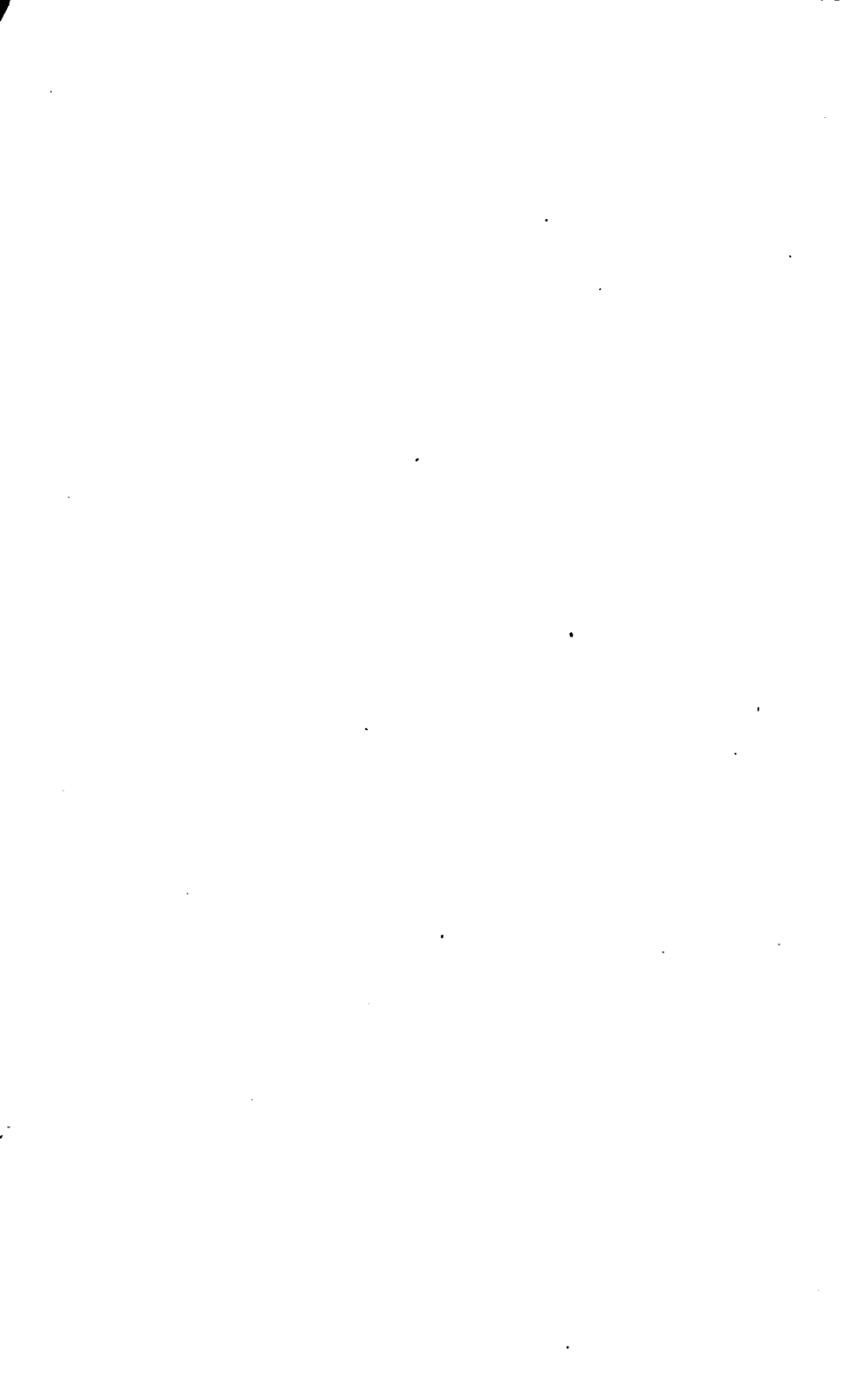
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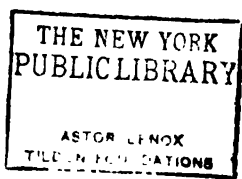
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THE
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OF THE
REVOLUTIONS OF RUSSIA.

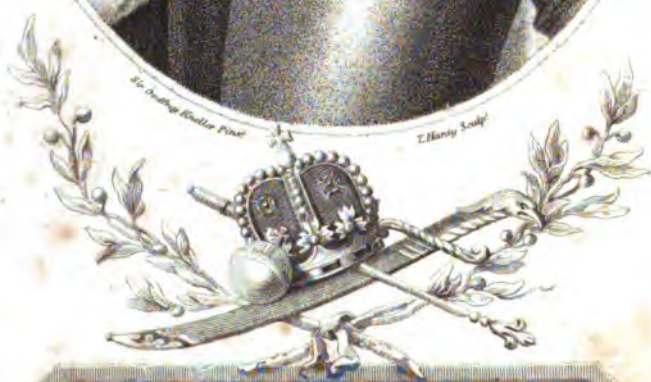
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The Great Russian Prince

J. Hardy Sculp



Peter Alexiévitch.

Charles Ham Smith
No 96

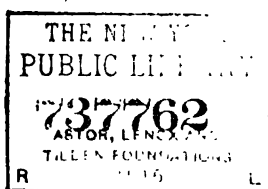
THE
HISTORY
OF THE
REVOLUTIONS OF RUSSIA,
TO THE
ACCESSION OF CATHARINE THE FIRST;
INCLUDING
A CONCISE REVIEW
OF THE
MANNERS AND CUSTOMS
OF THE
SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

By HENRY CARD,
OF PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
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1804.
56



MAY 1934
JUN 1934
JUL 1934

T O

LORD HENRY PETTY, M.P.

MY LORD,

THE history of Dedications is not crowded with many edifying or pleasing scenes to independent minds. In each successive age of English literature, the pages of several illustrious names have been sullied by inscribing their compositions to those who deriving their sole distinction from hereditary greatness, were strikingly deficient in sagacity to discern, taste to judge, and friendship to encourage. I may venture to assert, my Lord, that the present race of Writers are peculiarly exempt from this foul stain upon Letters.

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Perhaps

21 Nov 1960

DEDICATION.

Perhaps the Poet, whose imagination is constantly wandering in the regions of fancy, may be allowed an extensive latitude of panegyric, in his dedicatory address to his friend or patron. But the Historian, whose work is, or at least ought to be, a solid fabric of truth, should be scrupulously exact in not setting out with a falsehood; I mean, he should not prostitute his labours to him, who neither possesses, nor seeks to possess, the honourable accomplishment of learning.

Your Lordship's abilities will shield me from that reproach; abilities which, permit me to say, attracted general notice, when we studied together the same lessons at Westminster School.

Accept, therefore, these following sheets as a mark of my respect and esteem;

DEDICATION.

vii

esteem ; and blush not, my Lord, to see this truth declared, that while others of your rank and years are devoting their hours to a round of useless pursuits, you are nobly laying, with all the application of youth, and judgment of age, the firm foundation of those public virtues, which, I may safely predict, will soon make your character admired by your country, as one who is no less able than solicitous to promote and maintain its real interest, honour, and happiness.

Believe me, my LORD, to remain

Your much obliged and

Most devoted Servant,

HENRY CARD.

Chapel Hill, Margate,

June 1, 1804.



PREFACE.

TO the spirit of curiosity which nature has implanted in our minds, we may reasonably ascribe that universal homage which the genius of history has received from countries polished and barbarous. Under the influence of this passion, which pervades all classes, the miserable occupations even of the savage are not surveyed with cold indifference nor with silent contempt.

From the various subjects adapted for historical composition, I have been inclined to select those Revolutions, which have as deeply shaken, as they have now firmly established, the massy fabric of the Russian empire, in the hope of communicating to the Public a more particular knowledge than has hitherto been obtained of those occurrences, which, however remote from our times, are deserving of
some

some attention, as they serve to point out and explain the domestic causes which prevented Russia from assuming, until so late a period, her proper station in the balance of Europe. Yet how difficult is the attainment, though laudable the desire, to tread in the footsteps of truth during the darkness and anarchy of her early age.

Without expatiating on the nature of my subject, a few observations may not displease the reader. On an attentive examination of Russia, I was at last induced to think and conclude that a narrative of her memorable transactions, under the name of *Revolutions*, might excite some curiosity; which would be but faintly kept alive, if I entered too minutely on the details of a history, abounding with events of too uniform a complexion to be always interesting.

But my chosen theme, in point of execution, might have been numbered with the plans of the speculative theorist, if the learned and voluminous histories of Levesque, and of his rival Le Clerc, whose knowledge of the Russian language and situation gave them an easy access to the national annals, had not afforded me such a fund of materials as might gratify

gratify the keenest appetite for historical research.

Yet, although I have regarded these diligent Frenchmen as the two principal historians upon whose solid foundations I have raised the superstructure of my *Revolutions*, the reader will perceive that my duty, as well as inclination, has incited me to explore every literary channel within my reach, in the wish to obtain a perfect insight into the subject I have ventured to treat.

Attached to no Russian party, and too far removed to be infected by their fears or their prejudices, I have presumed, in deducing the revolution of Peter the Great, as indeed in every other revolution, where a freedom of opinion could be safely admitted, to decide for myself, without servilely transcribing the exaggerated malevolence of one writer, or the indiscriminate partiality of another. In the view of the internal reformatations of this great man, which, under circumstances adverse and discouraging, were prosecuted with an unremitting ardour that calls for the eternal gratitude of his country, and in the details of his private life, where the unbiassed and reflecting mind will connect even the extravagancies



CONTENTS.

FIRST REVOLUTION.

THE Introduction of the Varagians, and the Foundation of Monarchy by their Leader Rurik Page 1

SECOND REVOLUTION.

The Establishment of Christianity in the Reign of Vladimir I. Sviatoslavitz surnamed the Great - - 21

THIRD REVOLUTION.

The Invasion, Conquest, and Tribute of the Tatars - 53

FOURTH REVOLUTION.

The happy Consequences of the first systematic Attempt of Russia to deliver herself from the Tyranny of the Tatars in the Reign of Ivan III. Vassiliévitz - 110

FIFTH REVOLUTION.

The Progress of Russian Emancipation in the Reign of Vassili IV. Ivanovitz - - - 139

SIXTH

SIXTH REVOLUTION.

<i>The last Epoch of the Decline of the Tatars.—The Destruction of the Kingdom of Kazan and Astrakan, in the Reign of Ivan IV. Vassilivitz, the first Czar, surnamed by Russians, the Terrible,—by Foreigners, the Tyrant</i>	- - -	Page 154
---	-------	----------

SEVENTH REVOLUTION.

<i>The Extinction of the House of Rurik; the Usurpation of Boris and Demetrius, and the Establishment of the House of Romanof</i>	- - -	274
---	-------	-----

<i>Concise Review of the Manners and Customs of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries</i>	- - -	395
---	-------	-----

EIGHTH REVOLUTION.

<i>The Accession of Peter the Great</i>	- - -	456
---	-------	-----

ERRATA.

PAGE	LINE	
193,	17,	for commander read commanders
213,	7,	— their read its
217,	13,	— the suspicion of the Czar, read his suspicion
273,	3,	— condescended read condescend
301,	13,	— not read now
481,	16,	— whole utility, read the utility of which
613,	13,	after portion insert of his time
627,	13,	for pursuits read pursuit

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
REVOLUTIONS OF RUSSIA.

FIRST REVOLUTION.

*The Introduction of the Varagians, and the Foundation of
Monarchy by their Leader Rurik.*

THE infancy of all nations is blended in fabulous confusion. Of so parsimonious and contradictory a nature are the literary monuments of the first periods of society, that a wide field of inquiry presents itself for the exercise of our intellectual faculties. And yet it generally happens, that after our most minute researches, we still wander in the labyrinths of error, from a combination of circumstances utterly irreconcilable; with such radical obstinacy does fiction usurp the seat of truth.

But perhaps it is not to be regretted, that in this state we do not see any glimmering light, or feel any refreshing air of hope, to give

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further

further ardour to our pursuit; for the duty of history is violated, when it conveys no moral instruction, nor opens new sources of knowledge.

Without therefore involving the attention in unprofitable speculation, it may be permitted to form an hypothesis, which is not distorted by eccentricity, nor enfeebled by complication. Perhaps, with some claim to propriety of observation, it may be asserted, that the liberty of the gross mass of the people was first invaded during a state of war; where one man, by his superior elevation of mind, and towering display of bravery, soon bears down the primary equality of their union. This long duration and predominant passion for warfare among ferocious tribes, where each merciless genius could have its full scope, and yet where at least the appearance of agreement was so absolutely necessary for their mutual preservation, must sweep away in some degree the encroachments of disorder, and attemper the minds of the people to some palpable shape of obedience. The finishing stroke to the work is then only wanting: the standard of order will not only be erected, but established, if the chief's equity in peace be commensurate with his valour in war.

Perhaps, from bands of this feeble texture, from this mixture of force and consent,
the

the rude outlines of institutions are mellowed into political perfection. Hence the progress of empire; and hence perhaps arise, fashioned by the operation of moral and physical causes, the various forms of government throughout the different parts of the globe.

It is about the ninth century, that the cloud of darkness which involved the immense region of Russia, begins to be dispelled by the faint gleams of historic light; an air of veracity accompanies the chronicles which commemorate the events of that period; and we for the first time learn, that along the shores of the Dnieper, the Neva, and the Volkhof, dwelt a race of people, whose genealogy was venerable'.

* Pride and ignorance have suggested many fanciful ideas on the Russian origin. The bewildered imagination of some writers have searched even the Scriptures, in the vain hope of discovering some clue to guide them in their etymologies of the Russian name. Hear the result of their lucubrations: "Et quoniam ab Ezechiele propheta, Gog princeps, Rosch, Mesch, et Thubal. Rosch sunt Russi; Mesch, Mosi; et Thubal, Tobolskenes." See Sigisfred Bayer's valuable dissertation, *De Origine Russorum*, Comment. Academ. Petropolitanae, tom. viii. p. 399. Other authors are quoted by Herbelot in his *Bibliothèque Orientale*, as embracing this fabulous opinion. Page 722. The reader, who may wish to obtain a copious and authentic account of the ancient inhabitants of Russia, we refer to the introduction of Mr. Tooke's *History of Russia*, who has laboured with much happiness to explore and discriminate their various origins; vol. i. p. 1—43.

HISTORY OF THE

The slaves, or as they are vulgarly called Scлавonians, like the fastidious Athenians could boast themselves to be the Aborigines of the soil which they inhabited. Their principal city, denominated Slavenfk², was placed near the lake Ilmen. But afterwards, compelled by the triple scourge of war, pestilence, and famine, to abandon this seat of their ancestors, they constructed on the banks of the Volkhof, the new capital of Novgorod³, which maintained above three hundred years, her proud superiority of rank amidst all the shocks of ravaging ambition.

The Novgorodians, though enslaved by all the prejudices of ignorance, did not affect to condemn the lucrative arts of commerce. Their situation was commodious for an intercourse of trade with the people residing on both shores of the Baltic; and their adventurous spirit enabled them to exchange with the merchants of Constantinople⁴ their native commodities of wax, furs, corn, and hydromel,

² Mr. Tooke seems inclined to cast a shade of doubt on the existence of this city. Vol. i. p. 39.

³ Levesque, *Histoire de Russie. Hambourg et Brunswick*, 1800. Tom. i. p. 57. "Æque incerta fama de Novgorodii urbis origine," is the unsatisfactory expression of the learned and critical Bayer. See *De Origine Rufforum*, Comment. Academ. Petropolitanz, tom. viii. p. 435.

⁴ In the tenth century the sons of Russia were intimately known to the Greeks, as may be seen in that curious memorial

mel, for the foreign and enervating luxuries of silk and wine. From Lithuania, even to the mountains which form the boundary of Siberia, and from Biel-ozero and the lake of Rostof, even to the White Sea, their dignity was gratified, and their vengeance appeased by tributary offerings.

This extent of power, this advancement in industry, this friendly and hostile intercourse with remote nations, soon acquired to their arms the respect of their more impoverished and unenlightened neighbours. We recognize at once their strength and security, in this arrogant exclamation, "Who shall dare to resist the gods and the great Novgorod?"

Commerce has always been considered the handmaid of liberty; and on this spot, where now are exercised at least the forms of despotism, existed, in the times we are recording, a republican government. "The principle

morial of the geography and trade given by the emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus. *De Administ. Imperii*, c. 2. p. 55, 56. c. 9. p. 59—61. c. 13. p. 63—67. c. 37. p. 106 c. 42. p. 112, 113. The reader may also see the industry of Bayer, by the assistance of Russian and Scandinavian Chronicles and Traditions, advantageously employed on this subject in his valuable dissertation, *De Geographia Russiæ vicinarumque Regionum*, circiter A. C. 984 in *Comment. Academ. Petrop.* tom. ix. p. 367.—422. tom. x. p. 371—419.

of a popular state is virtue⁵, according to the philosophical Montesquieu: but what rapid strides to virtue could be expected from a people, wallowing like the rest of their countrymen, in profound ignorance; where the only spur to wealth was the love of oppression or of avarice; and where mutual hatred⁶ had prepared the way for dissensions, those inlets to popular anarchy, violence, and rapine!

A. D.
862.

To marshal such a turbulent people in a decorous and systematic array, to allay the spirit of discontent without weakening the efficacy of subordination, required the suggestions of a mind invigorated by zeal, and matured by experience. Unfortunately for the drooping liberties of the Novgorodians, they possessed no character so gifted.

To harmonize, therefore, the jarring parts of their state, they were constrained to solicit

⁵ De l'Esprit des Loix; à Geneve, 1749; liv. iii. c. 3. p. 19.

⁶ "De mutuis odiorum facibus inflammati, exortis denique gravissimis seditionibus." See Moscoviticarum Auctores varii, Francofurti, 1600. in 1 vol. fol., p. 3. This noble author was twice dispatched on embassies to Russia, first by the Emperor Maximilian, and afterwards by the Emperor Ferdinand. His diligence and situation enabled him to acquire much information: and that he has not been sparing of it to his readers, may be testified in his own and the several other works which compose this respectable volume. Let me here add, that the several writers who relate in the sixteenth century, the history of Russia in the Latin language, are far superior in their compositions to any other foreigners of a subsequent date.

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the protection of a race, furious in adversity, tyrannical in success, instructed to consider courage as the only virtue, pusillanimity as the only crime, the sword the only authority, and proud to surmount every arduous obstacle by a spontaneous and unconquerable perseverance.

From the bleak regions of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, emerged this swarm of barbarians, whose valorous achievements so speedily obtained the fear of their enemies. At the first sound of the horn, they darted from their forests, seized their arms, encircled their leader, ascended their barks, and explored every coast in search of naval and military enterprise. The spirit of predatory enterprise pervaded and animated all the Scandinavian youth. In the design of indulging this favourite pursuit, they first approached the Baltic. From thence, they came to the eastern shores, the abode of Fennic and Sclavonian tribes: and the primitive Russians of the lake Ladoga paid a tribute, the skins of squirrels, to these strangers, on whom they bestowed the name of Varagians, or Corsairs⁷.

Cunning

⁷ See Theophilus Sigifred Bayer de Varagis, in Comment. Academ. Petropolitanz, tom. iv. p. 275—311. See likewise Herbelstein, p. 2.—This name, however, seems common to all who sallied forth on piratical expeditions. Nestor, the earliest and best of Russian annalists, whose chronicle closes in the year 1115, but which was obscure until pub-

HISTORY OF THE

Cunning and severity marked the character of their leader Rurik; prone to hear, inexorable to punish, life and death hung on his decision, and he administered them with small attention to justice. His brothers Sinaus and Truvor were his associates in power, his equals in brutality, his superiors, perhaps, in desperate boldness.

Such were the men selected by the republicans of Novgorod to purge their city from the impurities of discord, and to repel the formidable incursions of their neighbours, who, profiting by the distraction of their intestine feuds and divisions, pursued their successes with unceasing vigour. In their first connexions with the natives, they were content to appear in the unsuspicious garb of friends and allies against their inland foes; but afterwards* they changed the character

lified at St. Peterburgh; 1767, in 4to, expressly says, that they were Swedish, Norman, English, and Russian Varages. See a Note of Mr. Tooke, in his History of Russia, vol. i. p. 142. In his *Antiquités de la Russie*, tom. i. p. 47. and in page 60, Levesque styles them *Varaigues Russes*. Although it is utterly impossible to account satisfactorily for the present name of this mighty empire, yet Levesque's expression implies, that these Varagians already bore the name of Russians.

* The chronology of M. Levesque fixes A. D. 862 for the year in which Rurik accepted their involuntary oaths of allegiance; while historians of less accuracy and information present him with the reins of government at an earlier period.

character of dependents into masters; and Rurik became the founder of a dynasty which reigned above seven hundred years.

Those who look at the events of history through the telescope of philosophy, must be inclined to disbelieve the chronicles, which assert that the slaves of Novgorod surrendered their rights by their own free and unanimous consent'. The testimony of all ages informs us, freedom is a plant of so hardy a growth, that it cannot be entirely choked up but by weeds of pestiferous rankness. A love for their native privileges can therefore be well supposed to have taken a deep root in the hearts of the Novgorodians, although their ideas of civil li-

period. See *Republica Moscovitica*, Lugd. Batav. 1630, p. 5.; *Histoire des Czars*, tom. 1. p. 7.; and *Williams's Rise, Progress, and present State of the Northern Governments*, vol. ii. p. 15. The date of the last writer, however, may be called accurate, compared to the two former.

⁹ I shall here transcribe a passage from a writer, who turns a ready ear of belief to this improbable transaction: "Reliqui vero circa Ilmensem lacum Russi Gostomisselum, qui Novgorodiam urbem Patriam jam tum potentem, & dudum sui generis, splendide ampliavit, de duce sibi eligendo consulere. Is cum sine prole esset masculâ, summâ, quâ pollebat prudentiâ, & magnanimitate, author Russis fuit exteros sibi reges querendi." In his next sentence he fixes the time when these three brothers were called to their new government by the influence of this sage citizen. See *Jacobus Reutenfels de Rebus Moschoviticis*, Patavii, 1680, lib. i. p. 35. We are still more surprised to read in the sensible pages of Herbestein, that the Russians voluntarily invested themselves with the badge of foreign servitude.

berty

berty¹⁰ must have been so crude and defective. Are we not then authorised in concluding, that their weakness, not their will, submitted them to the permanent command of these strangers?

The three brothers, Rurik, Sinaus, and Truvor, anxious to preserve the dominions entrusted to their care, resolved to fix their residence on the three principal frontiers of the republic. A just sense of the common interest and danger urged Rurik to establish his seat of government near the Volkhof, and to raise the town¹¹ of Ladoga, which
his

¹⁰ The word Liberty has been lately so much abused, and twisted into so many incongruous shapes, by the artifices of factious men, that we must trouble the reader with a sentence or two on this subject, that we may not be associated with those who consider her altar only to be found in the REPUBLIC of France. In our ideas of liberty, we do not agree with the definition given by Justinian in his Institutes:—"Facultas ejus, quod cuique facere libet, nisi quod vi aut jure prohibetur;" lib. i. tit. iii. De Jure Personarum; which has been so unworthily adopted by the penetration of the great Blackstone, in his Commentaries, vol. i. p. 6—125. Christian's edition;—but with that ornament of our church, Archdeacon Paley, who opens his admirable chapter upon Civil Liberty, with the following definition: "Civil liberty is, the not being restrained by any law but what conduces in a great degree to the public welfare." See Paley's Philosophy, twelfth edition, vol. ii. chap. v. p. 164.

¹¹ Claude Duret, in his *Tresor de l'Histoire*, &c. &c. Cologne, 1613, p. 864. rightly places the first residence of Rurik at Ladoga. The station of his two brothers is not quite so clear, in the opinion of some writers. The indefatigable Bayer has produced their discordant accounts in his ingenious

his caution induced him to surround with a rampart of earth, now called Old Ladoga, from a new city being erected near this ancient place by the munificent spirit of the first Peter.

Here the military genius of Rurik was displayed in preventing the inroads of the maritime people, who, stimulated by the hope of plunder, might endeavour to bring destruction to the state of Novgorod, by entering the Volk-hof from the lake Ladoga. Sinaus fixed his station at Bielozero, then situate on the northern shore of the lake of the same name, which Vladimir the first was afterwards to convey to the mouth of the Chesna. His duty consisted in bestowing a constant attention on the movements of the Biarmians, whose territories were perhaps no less populous than extensive; that large tract of country which stretches from the lake Ladoga to the Dvina, was entirely possessed by those restless and consequently dangerous neighbours; and a writer, whose diligence and critical accuracy have been rewarded with the valuable praise of producing the best history of Russia, has

nious and learned treatise *De Geographiâ Russiæ vicinarumque Regionum*, circiter A. D. 984. in *Comment. Academ. Petropolitanzæ*, tom. x. p. 414.

hazarded

hazarded a conjecture, that their dominions reached even to the coasts of the Frozen Sea, and to the mountains which now separate ancient Ruffia from the icy regions of Siberia". Isbork, near Pscove, was the allotted post of Truvor; by his courage and prudence, the Tschudes, the ancient inhabitants of Livonia, were to be awed into a temperate subjection.

This wise distribution of their several seats of government, must not only evince to the observing reader on what designs and conditions the Varagian brothers were called by the republicans of Novgorod, but likewise with what a watchful eye they for a time regarded the performance of an agreement so fatally made, so precariously held, and so irrecoverably broken. And as in the time of war and peace, they seized every opportunity of testifying their abhorrence of royalty, and love for equality", the dread of a revolt obliged Rurik for some time to uphold the

¹² Levesque, vol. i. p. 61. Among other writers of great respectability, Mr. Tooke has thrown his offering of praise on this voluminous work of the learned and critical Frenchman; and none will dispute that his gift is no less spontaneous than unexceptionable.

¹³ We will venture to prognosticate, that as the reader advances in these revolutions, he will rarely have to accuse their descendants of displaying either by word or deed, such presumptuous rashness.

Slavonic commonwealth in the humble capacity of its active monitor, its faithful guardian, and delegated general. But those who are called in to protect, will not long be contented without seeking the means to command; and as the hopes of Rurik were drawn from the weakness of his adversaries, in conjunction with talents peculiarly adapted to conduct the most hazardous designs, he soon succeeded in converting the republic of Novgorod into an independent sovereignty²⁴.

It must not, however, be supposed, that the slaves of Novgorod tamely submitted their necks to the galling yoke, without first employing every expedient which their scanty resources could furnish to revenge the perfidy of the Scandinavian prince.

On the first discovery of his open violation of their original compact, with all the passion and precipitancy of betrayed men, they disclaimed that obedience which their proud and restless dispositions had ever paid with reluctance and impatience; and to convince their invader that the idea of a republic was as much kept alive in their actions, as in their thoughts, they entrusted their lives

²⁴ " Ils osèrent même se considérer comme créanciers de ces Princes, et comme pouvant ventrer dans tous leur droits, s'ils n'étoient payés par les secours qu'ils attendoient." *Histoire Physique, Morale, Civile, et Politique, de la Russie, ancienne et moderne.* Par M. Du Clerc, à Paris, 1783. tom. 1. p. 94, 95.

and

and cause into the hands of Vadime, a Novgorodian citizen, whose daring boldness in the field had purchased him the title of the Valiant, from the gratitude and admiration of his countrymen.

But victory does not always support the scales of justice; and all the generous struggles of Vadime to preserve the native independence of the great Novgorod¹⁵, instead of blunting the courage of his opponents, only served more to augment their activity and to exasperate their malice.

The unequal contest was soon decided; Rurik met, engaged, and discomfited them. Every incentive to persistence in their cause was checked by Rurik's transpiercing with his own sword the breast of the patriotic Vadime¹⁶.

When we consider the Varagian first starting from the shades of obscurity, his reception, and his agreement with the Novgorodian state, and the duration of time his descendants maintained an authority al-

¹⁵ "La liberté," says the eloquent and eccentric citizen of Geneva, "est un aliment de bon suc, mais de forte digestion; il faut des estomacs bien sains pour le supporter." See *Oeuvres de Rousseau*, tom. viii. Politique, p. 312. The taste of this desirable food would have only proved bitter, perhaps, to the poor Russians, as they were precluded from all its benefits by their mental condition.

¹⁶ *Le Clerc*, tom. i. p. 98.

most unexampled in the annals of ancient or modern history, this revolution, although little calculated to excite the interest of the reader who solely delights in the view of civilized scenes, yet may not be considered as wholly undeserving of attention.

Instead, however, of endeavouring, according to the maxims of sound policy, to conciliate the esteem and affection of the vanquished, by a display of clemency, the successes of Rurik only rendered him more implacable. Whoever was audacious by his credit with the people; whoever was formidable by his despair; whoever had shewn the smallest countenance to the insurrection of Vadime, had committed crimes which no justification could vindicate, no penitence absolve. Their cries of supplication, their promises of obedience were alike disregarded; and the stern conqueror did not sheathe his sword until it was no less discoloured by the blood of innocence than guilt¹⁷.

Soon after this disgusting butchery, he saw his sway enlarged by the death of his two¹⁸ brothers, who left no offspring to sup-
ply

864.

¹⁷ It is a difficult question perhaps to decide, whether fear or revenge had the greatest share in this massacre of the vanquished. We might be inclined to attribute it solely to the former, if history and experience did not manifest to us the close sympathy of these two passions.

¹⁸ The name of these two brothers has given birth to an interesting tragedy by Soumarokoff. His scenes, though
extremely

ply their places. Their appanages consoled him for their loss; and those four considerable lakes, the Ladoga, Onega, Peypus, and Biel-ozero, then became the boundaries of his kingdom¹⁹.

But however regardless Rurik shewed himself of adorning his victory with the picture of humanity, yet in the distribution of domains, acquired by so much blood, and so little justice, may be traced the outlines of a wise arrangement.

Filled, with the most disquieting apprehensions of the deep hatred of an aggrieved people, his prudence, and not his generosity, assigned to the most eminent of his chiefs some cities²⁰, or rather straggling villages:

extremely deficient in the representation of historical truth, yet are in general finished, as far as his subject will admit, with such a chaste yet rich colouring, that he deserves to be called the *Racine* of Russia. The poet, however, utters some sentiments relative to the conduct and duty of sovereigns, as we should have thought would not have lived in the despotic atmosphere of the Russian court. He makes Sinaf, the hero of his story, observe, "que notre gloire fasse la gloire des nos peuples, que notre bonheur soit leur prospérité, et ne cherchons notre félicité, que pour rendre les autres heureux. Si notre intérêt est nuisible à nos peuples, ce n'est qu' intérêt, bonteux et méprisable." *Acte second, p. 22.* Sinave et Trouvoire, *Trajedie Russe, faite par M. Soumarokoff, et traduite en François, par le Prince Dolgoroufsky.*

¹⁹ Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 96.

²⁰ Herbestein greatly diminishes the value of these gifts by, these words: "*Castris inter amicos et famulos divisit.*" *Roman Moscow, Comment. p. 3.*

but it is undetermined whether they held and received these military benefices, or fiefs, as independent and permanent possessions, or only during his pleasure, and in subordination to his supreme command.

From this measure he derived many beneficial consequences. That habitual spirit of inquietude which formed so prominent a feature in these undisciplined leaders, and which in the indolence of peace would have inevitably excited them to some popular commotion, was happily directed to guard the frontiers from the frequent attacks of the surrounding nations; he was thus enabled to establish his seat of government on a more solid foundation, by an absence which left him little to dread from their jealous and turbulent tempers.

Having adopted these methods for the welfare of his estates, perhaps in the design of silencing effectually, by his presence, the voice of disaffection, he transferred his residence to Novgorod; which a wise precaution for his own and the public safety urged him to encompass with a rampart of earth, supported by stout palisades, which embraced, according to their rude and scanty ideas, all the complex principles of fortification²¹. But it is not the momentary glance, but the cir-

²¹ Levesque, tom. i. p. 64.

cumspect look, which 'must guard the throne from the dangers of treason; and Rurik, too much engrossed in carrying into execution his plan of interior stability, the chief object, it seems, of his policy, and sole employment of his time, perceived not the gathering storm, so pregnant with mischief on its first appearance.

Proud of their past fortune, and discontented with their present state, the instruments of his greatness, his own Varagian chiefs, had nearly reduced the Scandinavian conqueror of Novgorod to the most abject misery, the most servile condition. These men, cast in the rudest mould of nature, beheld with disappointment and rage that flame of rapacity which originally burnt with such vehement fury in their prince's breast, suddenly damped by his undivided attention to the establishment of civil order and internal defence, occupations so little congenial to the temper of the men and the spirit of the times.

Disdaining, therefore, such pacific plans, they shook off their allegiance, and enlisted themselves under the banners of Oskold and Dir, the two sovereigns of Kief or Kiow²²:

²² We must confess that we are rather surprised in not discovering, in Mr. Tooke's intelligent History of Russia, some traces of a desertion which might have produced another revolution in the state of Novgorod.

but

but whether they may be so called from hereditary right, or from successful usurpation, is involved in doubtful tradition²¹.

The new-raised pillars of the Novgorodian state would now perhaps have tottered to their very basis by the invasion of these rebels, who might have aroused the Slavonians once more from their lethargy, by the cries of revenge, if their departure had proved a deliverance, instead of a change of servitude. Thus fortunately the powers of Rurik escaped all injury in this passing tempest.

After this alarming revolt, the measures of the Varagian chief seem to have been taken with such wisdom, performed with such vigour, and followed up with such success, that no spirit of mutiny again appeared to disturb his government; and he passed the remainder of his days in the bosom of security and peace. He died after a reign of seventeen years, committing his infant son Igor to the care and protection of his kinsman Oleg. 879.

At the distance of upwards of nine hundred years, when the cloud of legends so much darkens the light of truth, that we can with difficulty grope our way in these remote

²¹ The nature of these princes' claim to Kief, seems greatly to embarrass Levesque. See tom. i. p. 65, 66.

transactions, it might be justly styled both folly and presumption to attempt a portrait of the first prince of northern Russia; and, perhaps, if the evidence of well-authenticated records enabled us to draw aside the veil which conceals the secret springs of so many of his actions, the justice of history would then only allow us to observe, that the character of Rurik may be succinctly comprised in artful sagacity, patient firmness, unforgiving malice, and unremitting perseverance.

SECOND REVOLUTION.

*The Establishment of Christianity in the Reign of Vladimir I.
Sviatoslavitz surnamed the Great.*

WHEN the spirit of conquest, and the love of plunder, first enabled the Varagians to triumph over the sickly state of Novgorod, the bond of their political union was soon weakened by their inattention to those benefits, which arise from the establishment of a regular succession of their princes: and time, which should have eradicated, only more quickly ripened, the seeds of this pernicious neglect. Insensible to the advantages of a fixed hereditary lineage, which was so admirably calculated to secure the order, stability, and quietude of their government, the uncle generally, or the next prince of the blood, in preference to the son of the deceased sovereign, stepped into the vacant throne, whilst the claims of the heir apparent and his brothers were silenced by independent appanages.

The principles of corruption and disorder therefore soon crept into the kingdom, broken into so many separate principalities. Innu-

merable wars afflicted every part of the state with all those calamities which flow from turbulence and confusion. A kingdom thus patched up from such disjointed and discordant pieces, thus harassed by constant dissensions, thus consuming its strength by internal hostilities, only required the appearance of an enemy to be subjugated on the first onset. While these inward conflicts were thus carried on with such unceasing rancour, the descendants of Rurik, without pretending to penetrate through the dense umbrage of futurity, might have predicted the rapid approach of their country to Tatar oppression.

The ¹ fierce Sviatoslaf, or Sphendosthlabus ², the grandson of Rurik, whose sword was glutted by the conquest of the Bulgarians, and whose strength of mind and body never melted away in the idleness of a sovereign (for he usually slept on the ground, wrapt up in a common bearskin, with his head reclining on a saddle, and, like the heroes of Homer ³, his hasty meal, which was often horseflesh ⁴,

973.

¹ Levesque, tom. i. p. 115—120. Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 140—152.

² His name is spelt in this manner by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrat. Imperii*, cap. 9.

³ If we look into the ninth book of the *Iliad* (lines 212, 213), this resemblance is evident.

⁴ The singular predilection of this barbarian hero for the food of the Calmucks and Tartars has been noticed by more historians than Levesque and Le Clerc.

was broiled on the coals) bequeathed to his sons, Yaropolk, Oleg, and Vladimir, the distinct principalities of Kief, of the Slaves near the lake Ilmen, and Novgorod¹.

The wanton cruelty of Oleg, who, uninfluenced by any of those violent passions which tend to irritate the mind and to banish the thoughts of pity, plunged his sword into the bosom of the son of Svenald, the friend and counsellor of his deceased father, was soon afterwards punished by the arms of his elder brother. Touched by the lamentations of the disconsolate parent, Yaropolk instantly marched a formidable army into the heart of his brother's dominions. The justice of his invasion was crowned with ample success. The adherents of Oleg, who deserved to have fought in a better cause, after sustaining his attack with desperate courage, were at last overpowered by the numbers, rather than by the manœuvres of those who engaged them; and the author of their misfortunes, in attempting to cross a bridge on which his fugitives had thronged, was pressed to death, and forced into the river: the dominions of his vanquished brother were the fruits of this victory. 975. 977.

Vladimir, under whose superior genius and auspicious reign the Russian state was first

¹ Rerum Moscovit. Comment. p. 3, 4.

destined to emit those glimmerings of light, which were afterwards to break out into the full splendour of day, fled at the approach of Yaropolk; whose troops, animated by the success of their late battle, like a resistless torrent, swept away every thing before them in their way to his brother's estates, which the voice of gratitude, or more probably fear, counselled him to bestow on his Boyars; who, in the weakness of the government, were taught to consider themselves more as the equals than the servants of their prince.

But their triumph was transient and immature. The high-spirited mind of Vladimir, impatient to wipe away the ignominy of his flight, and to obtain once more the sceptre of Novgorod, prevailed on the Varagians, to whom he had retired*, to draw their swords in defence of his cause. Their assurances of support were attended with the most prosperous consequences; for such was their fierceness of spirit, their activity of enterprise, such the terror of their name, that the Voyevodes of Yaropolk meanly crouched at the feet of Vladimir, without striking one blow for the preservation of a city, which both interest and duty called on them so loudly to defend. The prostrate Boyars were dismissed

* Herbestein, p. 4. Rerum Mosc. Comment. Histoire des Czars, p. 11.

from this perilous interview with a message to his brother, which strongly expressed his inward contempt for his character, or his just confidence in the superior courage of his Varagians: "Tell him," said the restored prince, "I am determined to visit him speedily at the head of a powerful army."

This menace was accelerated by an insult, 980. which at once mortified his personal vanity, and reflected on the baseness of his birth. The two brothers had demanded at the same time the hand of the daughter of Rogvolode, prince of Poltesk or Polotsk⁷. This city, watered by the wide flowing Dvina, was afterwards to give its name to a palatinate of Poland, and to acknowledge the sway of Russia when decorated with the trophies of that divided country. The father, apprehensive of exasperating the irascible temper of these princes by his own election, declared to them both, he would not interfere with the inclinations of his daughter. The moment the princess was acquainted with their respective proposals, she directly exclaimed, with all the offended pride of illustrious birth, *Far be it from my lot to unboot the son of a slave*⁸, my choice is fixed on Yaropolk. No sooner

⁷ Heberstein styles him Princeps Pescovizæ, p. 4 Perum Moscovit. Comment.

⁸ It was the custom at that time for young married women to pull off the boots of their husbands on the night of their wedding;

sooner was this rash speech conveyed to the ears of the amorous yet revengeful Vladimir, than he instantly pushed forward his bold Varangians against the prince of Polotsk. Their route was marked with blood. In this inundation of their fury, the sword of the furious Vladimir was buried in the bosom of Polotsk and his two sons; whilst the agonized princess was forced to receive the hand as yet reeking with the blood of her dearest relatives⁹.

Eager for more slaughter, and inflamed perhaps with expectations of the highest success, Vladimir next directed his victorious steps to Kief. This town, equally fortified by nature and the courage of its inhabitants, stood for a long time invincible; and the military fame of Vladimir must have been tarnished by the disgrace of a retreat, if the treachery of an individual had not obviated the effects of that resistance, which had fatigued his perseverance, and baffled his valour. The wretch, so devoid of gratitude as to betray his liberal benefactor, was a Voeyevode of the name of Blude. Flattered by the pro-

wedding; and the term slave is applied by the princess, because his mother Malucha was the concubine of Sviatoslaf, and the house-keeper (a curious title) of the princess Olga. See Tooke's History of Russia, vol. i. p. 191.

⁹ *Rerum Moscoviticarum Comment.* p. 4.

mises, and deceived by the gifts of the youthful Vladimir, he consented, at his desire, to alarm the fears of his brother against his faithful citizens, by assuring him that he had no foes but what his walls encompassed. His insinuations were so ably thrown out, that the unthinking prince fled on this presumption of their guilt : the inhabitants abandoned by their chief, were reduced to admit his more fortunate rival.

The dismayed Yaropolk, wherever he turned his eyes, had then to behold the activity of a victorious and implacable brother ; his spirit broken by such an unceasing pursuit, and obliged to contend at the same time in his new retreat with the horrors of famine and the surrounding troops of his brother, by the wicked counsels of Blude¹⁰, he at last took the fatal resolution of throwing himself on the mercy of Vladimir, under the full expectation that the ties of consanguinity would be respected. Instead of receiving his pardon and embrace, he was welcomed only by the daggers of his Varagians.

This sacrilegious offering to the manes of Oleg, which so justly shocks a civilized mind, neither mollified the heart of Vladimir, nor estranged the love of his subjects. Of the same odious complexion are the examples of those

¹⁰ Herbestein, *Rerum Moscovit. Comment.* p. 5.

writers, who celebrate the purity of primitive manners.

It is from scenes like these, so dyed with blood, that we turn aside with no inconsiderable sensation of pleasure, to relate an act, which, whether it proceeded from sentiments of policy or justice, will be read with complacency by those, who view with honest indignation the sin of ingratitude. To the treacherous exertions of Blude, Vladimir might fairly ascribe his guilty victory. For the space of three days, therefore, the prince was lavish in his professions of respect, and in his marks of honour on the author of his success; but when this time had expired, he threw off the irksome mask of dissimulation, and thus expressed his abhorrence of villainy like his, in these words: "In accumulating honours on thee far above thy proudest wishes, I have more than fulfilled my promise; but now the friend assumes the character of the judge", and in that capacity he condemns the traitor and assassin of his prince." On uttering these words, he punished his perfidy with death.

In the vast volume which history opens for our instruction, its pages are frequently defiled by instances of regal ingratitude. The

"Aujourd'hui, comme juge, je proferis le traître et l'assassin de son prince, is the expression of Levesque, *Histoire de Russie*, vol. i. p. 120.

brave and faithful Varagians, under whose steady adherence the power of Vladimir had arisen to so formidable an height, unhappily for themselves reproached the ingratitude of their prince, by urging their right to a tribute on the inhabitants of Kief¹², for their espousal of his cause. But fear and its concomitant hatred had so diffused their venom through his mind, that he was content to preserve his authority at the expence of his honour and gratitude.

Too weak openly to provoke their suspicions and resentment, by specious promises he contrived for a time to elude their demands, until he had so far increased his strength, that he no longer dreaded the effects of their resentment. Sensible of their weakness, these former defenders of his state narrowed their demands, and requested only his permission to embark for Greece. To this proposal he joyfully consented; and after selecting the bravest for his service, the monarch permitted the rest to depart under the notion that, instead of the skins of squirrels, their future services would be more munificently rewarded by silks and gold. Impatient of control, these hardy children of the north proceeded to Constantinople¹³, totally unsuspi-
cious

¹² Levesque, tom. i. p. 120. Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 154.

¹³ The reader may see in Ducange some curious particulars

cious of Vladimir's advice to his Byzantine ally, to have them dispersed and employed in different parts of his dominions, that their number or despair might afford no disquietude to Russia or the Empire¹⁴: so fatal is authority where fear is engendered; so wide is the chasm betwixt labour and recompence.

981. We shall avoid entering into the detail of
583. those desolating expeditions, which so much advanced the warlike fame of Vladimir in the estimation of his barbarous people; as they form only a series of wars, the motives as well as the consequences of which are without interest and without importance. The same motives which induce us to decline a delineation of the hideous features of destruction which characterized the incursions of Vladimir, will justify the brevity of our remarks, that the same excesses of ferocious

lars which he has extracted from the original writers of the state and history of the Russian Varagians, and of those who were a colony of English and Danes. *Glossarium Med. & Infimæ Græcitatæ*, sub voce *Βιζυγγοί*, *Med. et Infimæ Latinitatis*, sub voce *Vagii*. *Notæ ad Alexiad. Anna Comnena*, p. 256, 257, 258. *Notes sur Villehardouin*, p. 296, 299. See also the Annotations of Reiske to the Emperor Constantine's *Ceremoniale Aulae Byzant.* tom. ii. p. 149, 150.

¹⁴ Si vellet rebelliones eorum cavere, illos recipere quidem; sed per diversas urbes dispergeret, redire vero nullum sineret. See Bayer de Varagis, in *Comment. Academ. Petropolitanae*, tom. iv. p. 305.

cruelty¹⁵, stained the temples of religious worship, which were so profusely embellished with his triumphal spoils.

The tutelary deities¹⁶ of his country were arrayed in all those terrible and savage qualities, so congenial to the mind of Vladimir. And the rites which superstitious ignorance performed in honor of these idols, were impious in the extreme. Nothing was supposed to delight their gods, but scenes of madness, cruelty, and licentiousness; whilst their wrath could only be appeased by human sacrifices.

¹⁵ Impio dæmonium cultui deditum, are the words of the indignant and impartial Cromer. See *De Origine et Rebus gestis Polonoꝝum*. Bas. 1558. Lib. iii. p. 46. See likewise *La Religion ancienne et moderne des Moscovites*. Cologne, 1698. But in justice to the taste or to the humanity of the Russians we must observe, that they sometimes propitiated more amiable divinities. M. Levesque has drawn a graceful, but perhaps a too luxuriant description of their Roussalki, (the inferior goddesses of their woods and waters,) for the chaste and sober pen of the historian (*Hist. de Russie*, vol. i. p. 30.); and the reader will find an ample and curious account of the Slavonic Mythology, in the *Dissertations sur les Antiquités de Russie*, par Matthieu Guthrie, à Saint Petersbourg, 1795.

¹⁶ Procopius, however, would teach us to believe, that they acknowledged only *Θεοὶ ἑνός*, who created the world and darts the thunder; and that they sacrificed to him oxen and other kind of victims. See *Procopii Opera*, Paris, 1662, vol. i. de Bell. Goth. lib. iii. cap. 14. But the Lawyer of Cæsarea, and the secretary of the renowned Belisarius, however authentic his information may be concerning the events of his own times, yet has not approved himself sufficiently a diligent inquirer after truth, when he speaks of distant nations, to merit our adherence to his opinions. Witness his ignorant and ridiculous account of Britain.

In

985. In the choice of a victim for one of these pageants of power, the courtiers of Vladimir, under the execrable idea of rendering the sacrifice more acceptable to their gods, selected for the sacerdotal knife, a citizen, a young Varagian of christian faith, instead of a prisoner of war; whilst his unhappy father, in refusing to deliver him to their fanatical adoration, shared the same fate, by the ungovernable rage of the multitude¹⁷.

In this state of popular delusion, in this fulness of ignorance and barbarity which darkened all the region of Russia, by the interposition of divine Providence the sun of christianity arose, to illuminate the human mind, to purify the heart, and to enlarge the narrow boundaries of philanthropy.

But in order to exhibit a clear account of the rise, progress, and establishment of christianity, it is necessary to cast a retrospective view on the reigns of Oskold and Olga, and thence to point out those events which contributed from a conspicuous but sometimes imperceptible influence to the gradual introduction of the christian religion.

The first ray of evangelical light seemed to beam on the Russians under the reign of Oskold the prince of Kief; in one of those sudden excursions of piratical adventure which perhaps had before alarmed the timorous

¹⁷ Levesque, tom. i. p. 122. Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 155.

Greeks, the enterprising Oskold marked out their magnificent city of Constantinople¹⁸, as the chief object for plunder; this daring attempt was made with two hundred boats¹⁹, or *Monoxyla*, as they are called by the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus. If the whole force of their country had been exerted, their navy might have amounted to two thousand vessels. Without opposition they passed the Thracian Bosphorus. Emboldened rather than satisfied by this extraordinary success, they attempted and succeeded in occupying the port of Constantinople, under the reign of the Emperor Michael III. who had some time left his capital with the vain hope of chastising the insolence of the Saracens. On the first news of these dangerous visitors, he returned with his army to revive the fainting courage of his capital; the reader who keeps in his remembrance a geographical view of Constantinople, and the situation of the Russians,

¹⁸ Bayer fixes this first attempt of the Russians in the years 864 or 865. See his dissertation *De Rufforum prima Expeditione Constantinopolitana*, tom. vi. p. 365.

¹⁹ *De Administr. Imp.* cap. ix. These barks of the Russians may be compared in their imperfect construction to the *Camaræ* or *Euxine* vessels used by the Goths in their first naval expedition. See Strabo with Isaac Caufabon's Notes, Lib. xi. p. 758. and Tacit. Hist. Lib. iii. cap. xlvii. p. 185.

can well imagine the numerous difficulties²⁰ which the Emperor had to encounter in effecting a landing at the palace stairs, from whence his superstition led him to a church of the Virgin Mary; where the devout Emperor, with his no less devout Patriarch, passed the whole night in prayers; instead of meditating the relief of his people by a well determined spirit of resistance.

By the injunctions of the Patriarch, the garment of the Virgin Mary, a most precious relict, was drawn from the sanctuary and dipped into the sea; for they fondly persuaded themselves, that by this act of futile devotion the thunderbolt of divine vengeance would have been hurled against these fierce and boody barbarians. A seasonable tempest, however, released them from their present fears, by compelling the Russians to a precipitate retreat, which was most piously attributed to the propitious influence of the mother of God²¹. Oskold, the chief of this expedition,

²⁰ Vix potuit pertransire, et ingredi. See the learned Stritter's *Memoriæ Populorum Septentrionalium*, Petrop. 1771, 1779, tom. ii. pars ii. p. 959.

²¹ The following writers are quoted by Bayer in his dissertation *De Russorum prima Expeditione Constantinopolitana*, Comment. Academ. Petropol. as recording this enterprise of the Russians. Leo Grammaticus, p. 463, 464. Constantini Continuator in Script. post Theophanem, p. 121,

expedition, after enjoying the glory of humbling the Greek pride, demanded a peace, which was readily granted; perhaps from a secret persuasion, that in a second critical juncture, the succours of their divine Protectress might come too tardy. After the terms of the treaty had been adjusted, Oskold expressed a wish to become a Christian. And, under his auspices, a Greek bishop with the name of Metropolitan might for the first time have administered the sacrament of baptism in the church of Kief: but the salutary vegetation of the gospel was blighted by the ungenial touch of these barbarians; since, after the death of Oskold, this short glimpse of holy light was soon involved in a cloud of ignorance, so thick and heavy as to obscure almost all traces of their christian conversion.

Nor did this loathsome darkness disappear, until the Russian throne was mounted by the prince's Olga. A woman (perhaps of the meanest extraction) who could punish the death of her husband Igor, and be acknowledged as sovereign over a turbulent people, who then could scarcely submit with patience to the government of their lawful princes, must have been pre-eminently gifted with those mas-

122. Simeon Logotheta, p. 445, 446. Georgius Monachus, p. 535, 536. Cedrenus, tom. ii. p. 551. Zonaras, tom. ii. p. 162.

culine qualifications, which imprint the duty of obedience on minds the least tinctured with the virtues of civilization. Though gross idolatry overspread her country, yet the precepts and example of the missionaries transplanted by Oskold had made an impression on her heart too deep to be easily effaced; accordingly, moved by the wish of embracing christianity in the most august manner, or by the less spiritual desire of extending the circulation of her trade, she sailed from Kief to Constantinople in the time of public and private tranquillity.

The royal historian, the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, welcomed her arrival with all the honours appropriate to her rank; and with all the forms and ceremonies which could flatter her female vanity, and display the transient greatness of his luxury and splendour. From the numerous and costly presents, which at once perhaps excited her astonishment and gratified her avarice, we may select, as no mean specimens of imperial generosity, and as most adapted to a lady's wants, some vases of rare value, and a quantity of those fine stuffs which were then only fabricated in the East. The Emperor himself conducted her to the baptismal fount²²; where

²² The Polish Historian commits an unpardonable mistake when he says Joanne Zemisce imperante, Religionem Christianam suscepit, Lib. iii. p. 46—49. De Reb. Polon.

she received the venerated name of the Empress Helena ²³. The Russian chronicles would teach us to believe, that her beauty so captivated Constantine, that he offered to share his throne with her: but if the Emperor himself had not informed us that his wife was yet alive, we should want no better evidence to refute this tale, and to shew us that he would have indignantly rejected the union, than the perusal of his instructions to his son Romanus, in which he exposes the ill policy of listening to the overtures of foreign alliances ²⁴.

On her return to Kief and Novgorod, she pertinaciously adhered to her new religion; but this great princess, great does she deserve to be called, (for, in this barbarous age, she constructed towns and villages, formed bridges and roads for the benefit of trade, and established institutions of general utility,) sensibly experienced the weakness of her power, and the obstinacy of human nature in her unremitting endeavours to wean her nation and

²³ See Constantine de Cereemoniale Aulæ Byzant. tom. ii. cap. xv. p. 343—345. and Zonaræ Annales, Paris, 1687, tom. ii. p. 194.

²⁴ See the Twelfth Chapter of Constantine De Administr. Imper.

son from their attachment to the gods of their fathers²⁵.

Proud and sanguinary, and strangers to all those pursuits which give birth to acts of humanity and justice, her people scorned and were ill calculated to tread in the paths of christianity. To all the frequent pious exhortations of his mother, Sviatoslaf insultingly demanded, whether she wished him to become an object of contempt and derision to his companions²⁶? From the temper of this interrogatory, it requires no prodigious depth of sagacity to have foreseen, that the christian religion would soon shrink into insignificance and obscurity on the death of Olga. And indeed so rapid was its decline, that the churches erected by the fervent zeal of this princess, could scarcely preserve it from total extinction.

We have now contemplated the rise and progress of christianity, and deduced the visible causes of its decay. From this period,

²⁵ Cumque diu Olga, sed incassum, circa fidei Christianæ incrementum in patria ac præcipuè in filio Swatossao convertendo elaborasset. De Rebus Moscoviticis, p. 38. See also Herbestein, p. 3.

²⁶ Voulez vous, que mes amis se moquent de moi? L'evesque Hist. de Russie, vol. i. p. 100. See likewise Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 133.

a more pleasing exercise commences ; to observe the gradual extirpation of paganism, and to mark the final establishment of the christian religion.

The military renown, the increasing wealth, the unrelaxing firmness, the extensive authority of Vladimir, now began to command the fears and invite the attention of the neighbouring potentates²⁷. By gifts they courted his esteem; by embassies they solicited his conversion to their respective religions. Nearly at the same time, it is said, were presented to him, deputies from the Pope, or rather of some catholic prince, from the people of great Bulgaria, and from the Jews established among the Kozares. But all their prospects of success were darkened by the mission and lively eloquence of a Greek Metropolitan. This Prelate, whom the chronicles dignify with the appellation of a philosopher²⁸, though he failed in making an absolute proselyte of his illustrious auditor, was, however, dismissed with his friendship and gifts: an enviable happiness, which the rest had sighed for in vain. Indeed, so strong was the impression made on Vladimir, by the discourse of this theological advocate, that he dispatched six or ten Russians, of reputed wis-

986.

²⁷ Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 156.

²⁸ Tooke, vol. i. p. 196.

dom among their countrymen, to examine the religious principles and rites of their different countries.

They first directed their course to the Bulgarians eastward of Russia, and zealous champions of the warlike prophet of Mecca²⁹; but they soon changed their abode, little moved by their veneration for the apocryphal Koran. They afterwards visited the Latin churches of Germany, whose want of external ornament they beheld with the unfavourable emotions of pity and contempt. But in their arrival at Constantinople, they gazed, with inexpressible admiration and delight, on the magnificent dome of St. Sophia; and their attention was equally arrested by the pompous and alluring embellishments around their altars; by the impressive pictures of their saints and martyrs; by the rich vestments of their priests; by their idolatrous worship of images and relics; and by the pleasing order of their ostentatious ceremonies. A religion, therefore, which embraced such a succession of splendid rites, was soon considered by their

²⁹ "Et illi Bulgari," says an observing, though superstitious traveller, "sunt pessimi Saraceni, fortius tenentes legem Machometi quam aliqui alii." See the Latin relation of the Voyage of friar Rubruquis, in the first volume of Hackluyt's Voyages. Lond. 1598. p. 86.

uncultivated intellects, to contain the very essence of christianity³⁰.

With minds enraptured by these gaudy, though, perhaps, not unmeaning spectacles, they hastened their return to Vladimir. To his anxious inquiries, on the events of their mission, they dispatched, with a disdainful impatience, their account of the Latin ceremonial; whilst they expatiated with a visible satisfaction, and with all the glowing colours of enthusiasm, on the various beauties of Constantinople. We thought ourselves transported into Heaven, exclaimed they to their attentive monarch; nor were they slow to believe, that a choir of angels came down each day from the skies, to join in the sacred song of the Greeks³¹. Thus completely did the lustre of the Greek eclipse all hopes of their conversion to the Latin church. When the curiosity of the prince was sufficiently satisfied by their description, they implored his permission to be initiated into the pleasures of religious adoration at Constantinople.

No sooner had the boyars of his council perceived the effects of this recital on the

³⁰ Ils s'écrient dans leur extase, La véritable croyance est celle qui s'annonce avec tant d'éclat et de majesté. Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 157.

³¹ See an anonymous Fragment published by Bandurius; *Imperium Orientale, sive Antiquitates Constantinopolitanæ*, Par. 1711, tom. ii. p. 112, 113. de Conversione Russorum.

mind of Vladimir, than they instantly cried out, such was their fawning obsequiousness, that the religion, which could be honoured by the praises of the sage deputies, and embraced by the pious Olga, must be worthy of implicit belief³².

But though Vladimir listened to the voice of reason, or rather to the dictates of his own inclination, yet his conversion was retarded from the want of Greek priests. To demand them of the Emperor was a species of homage, at the very idea of which his lofty soul revolted; the barbarian, therefore, designed to sow with his sword, that baptism and instruction which, to have possessed in a proper manner, he would have judged no less wounding to his dignity than disgraceful to his valour.

This wild and eccentric plan was pursued with a persevering industry, and executed with a systematic spirit. An immense army, composed from the flower of his empire, soon passed the Taurican Chersonese, and unfurled their banners under the lofty battlements of the ancient Theodosia³³, the modern Kaffa. Before this place he is said to have addressed the Almighty Power, in a speech worthy of

³² Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 157, 158.

³³ See a note of Mr. Tooke's on this town, vol. i. p. 199. History of Russia.

himself, and his country, and his times. "Oh God, enable me to overcome this city, that from thence I may transport priests and christians into my dominions, whose piety and learning may instruct us in the true exercise of religious worship."

He then attacked the city, unaided by any 988.
of the implements of assault, which so essentially contribute to expedite the labours of a siege. But his slow progress, and the number of gallant men, which he devoted to death", might have excited, in a less ignorant mind, some apprehensions that his present conduct was considered as a direct violation of those moral and christian duties which he so anxiously wished to discharge.

After pressing the siege for six months, with an ineffectual vigour, the Pagan began to suspect, that he had adopted an expedient by no means favourable to his present conversion; and, with the shame of relinquishing his enterprize, he now entertained the most serious fears, that he must also renounce the pious object which provoked him to it, if a citizen, or, as some more rationally declare, a priest, had not preferred the virtues of spiritual to temporal obedience: a letter

" " Des milliers d'hommes périssent," says the philosophic Levesque, " parce qu'un barbare ne veut pas se faire baptiser comme un homme ordinaire." Histoire de Russie, tom. i. 126.

fixed to an arrow, shot from the top of the ramparts, delayed his march and rewarded his perseverance. Behind their camp, the besiegers discovered from this paper, was a spring, which alone enabled the besieged to receive, from its subterranean pipes, a supply of fresh water. The rejoiced Vladimir was not long in discovering and destroying this necessary support of a long resistance. The difficulties of the enterprize then vanished; the complaints of thirst were heard, felt, and soon remedied, by a general surrender. In possession of Theodosia, he saw himself master of the whole Chersonese³⁵.

By this victory his power was enlarged and his fancy gratified: but this inestimable gift of baptism formed not the sole object of his ambition: he aspired to mix his blood with the blood of the Cæsars, by a marriage with the princess Anne³⁶, sister of the reigning Emperors Basil and Constantine. His pretensions were enforced by the promise of conversion, and by the threat, that Constantinople might soon expect the same fate as Theodosia, should his demands be dismissed with contempt. After some affectation of

³⁵ Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 161.

³⁶ See Cedreni Compendiarium Historiarum, Par. 1647. tom. ii. p. 699. Zonaras, tom. ii. p. 221. La Religion ancienne et moderne des Moscovites, p. 8.

delay,

delay, they consented to the first proposal; since all regard to purity of descent was set aside to confirm their safety. At the same time, therefore, and in the city of Cherson³⁷, the rites of baptism and marriage were solemnized by the christian Pontiff. The city he restored to his brother-in-law; whilst abbots, priests, images, relics, holy books, and sacred vessels, were transported into Russia as rewards of this conquest and alliance³⁸.

On his return to Kief, every indignity which could be devised by the imagination of Vladimir, was offered to those idols which he had so long adored; under the sagacious view of diminishing their estimation, and consequently of obtaining a more ready acquiescence to his example. Peroun, the god of thunder, and the most august of their divinities, at his despotic command, was tied to the tail of a horse³⁹ and dragged through the streets of Kief; whilst twelve vigorous soldiers, during this woeful procession, battered,

³⁷ See Herbestein, *Rerum Moscov. Comment.* p. 3. The modern reader, observes Gibbon, (vol. x. p. 241. note 77.) must not confound this old Cherson of the Tauric or Crimean peninsula, with a new city of the same name, which has arisen near the mouth of the Borysthenes, and was lately honoured by the memorable interview of the Empress of Russia with the Emperor of the West.

³⁸ Levesque, tom. i. p. 127.

³⁹ *Equi caudæ alligatum. De Rebus Moscoviticis*, p. 42.

with

with clubs, the golden head and silver ears⁴⁰ of the mishapen image, until it was furiously thrown into the waters of the Borysthenes.

Immediately after this public act of expiatory vengeance, an edict of Vladimir, proclaimed to his subjects, that all those who refused the rites of baptism would be considered and treated as enemies of Jesus Christ and of their prince. On the moment this order was published, many thousands of Russians instantly flocked to the rivers, with obedient joy, to receive the sacrament of baptism⁴¹. No persecutions nor admonitions were necessary to strengthen this decree; since they all tacitly submitted to the truth and goodness of a doctrine, which had been adopted by him and his boyars⁴².

988. Such was the final establishment of christianity, which soon levelled with the ground

⁴⁰ Argenteo capite, auribus aureis. De Russorum, Moscoviticarum, et Tartarorum Religione, Sacrificiis, &c. Spiræ, 1522. p. 83.

⁴¹ Cedrenus, tom. ii. p. 589. attributes the general conversion of these barbarians to the miraculous preservation of the New Testament, after it had been thrown into the fire by the Pontiff, sent to them by the pious Emperor Basil. The same idle story is repeated, by the ignorance and superstition of Jacobus Reutenfelds. De Rebus Moscoviticis, lib. i. p. 42.—Cromer's observation on this event is still supported by the evidence of truth and experience. Atque ergo Græcos ritus ex eo tempore Russi mordicus retinent. De Reb. Polon. Lib. iii. p. 46.

⁴² Levesque, tom. i. p. 129, 130. Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 162.

the gross and incongruous edifice of Pagan superstition. It may not be deemed incompatible with our province, briefly to consider the Christian Religion, in this place, as one of the grand sources of civilization.

Among the most distinguished writers of antiquity, on the sentiments and morals of mankind, their most professed admirers cannot affirm that the majority of the people were made more virtuous by the clearness of their demonstrations, or by the utility of their axioms. We may admire the ingenuity of their abstruse speculations; the dexterous fabrication of their systems; their abstract reasonings on the nature of moral actions: but after this web of incoherence is unravelled, we *discover no firm position* ⁴³ *which distinctly marks the boundaries of our duty towards God and man, or teaches us firmly to believe in the immortality of the soul* ⁴⁴.

The few, who, by their study and researches, raised their minds to juster conceptions of the will and attributes of the Deity

⁴³ Can it be found in the jarring systems of the four most celebrated schools of philosophy, the Stoics, the Platonists, the Academics, and Epicureans.

⁴⁴ Look to the writings of Socrates, of Seneca, and of Cicero, especially to his philosophical works, the first book of the Tusculan questions, and the treatise De Senectute (particularly the three last pages), and the Somnium Scipionis, as exhibiting the most striking proofs of the force and imbecility of the human mind on this awful subject.

than

than the unenlightened multitude, wanted still the *sanction of a higher principle*⁴⁵, to enforce their precepts upon the people, however their seeming merits might recommend them to their practice and obedience. Hence, the duties of morality and religion frequently became matter of dispute instead of rules of action; and hence, no amelioration was effected in the minds and lives of any considerable portion of mankind. The gloomy temple of Polytheism stood unshaken; and the vices that are necessarily engendered in the polluted rites of idolatry, enslaved the human heart to all her enormities.

Whereas the religion of Jesus, even when disfigured by the wildest lineaments of fana-

⁴⁵ The late Mr. Cowper, in his beautiful poem the *Task*, which deservedly entitles him to a first rank among the sons of Parnassus, in a fine strain of piety has descanted on the dark and vague opinions of the antient Philosophers, respecting a future state and existence of a Supreme Being.

“ Their answers vague,
And all at random, fabulous, and dark,
Left them as dark themselves. Their rules of life,
Defective and unsanction’d, prov’d too weak
To bind the roving appetite, and lead
Blind nature to a God not yet reveal’d.”

See Vol. ii. Book ii. p. 61, 62.

When these great Philosophers dare to approach too near the Divinity, by the sole light of reason, says an ingenious Critic, tombent des plus hautes luminères dans les plus profondes ténèbres. Parallele de Homère et de Platon par M. l'Abbé Maffieu. Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions. Par. 1717. tom. ii.

ticism,

ticism, has a visible tendency to promote our mental reformation. Its precepts of morality, its directions of our daily conduct, are fitted to the meanest apprehension; short, instructive, plain, and irrefragable. In so clear and simple a manner is every truth, rule, duty, and practice, unfolded and illustrated, that none can mistake their meaning, except those who do not wish, nor dare not seek them; whilst these precepts also, which thus open the avenues to gradual civilization, which exalt the human heart to the highest state of perfection, are rendered equally practicable in every age or country. This momentous period, therefore, may not only be ranked as the æra of Russian Christianity, but as the commencement of Russian civilization: two events, which cannot be viewed with supine indifference, when it is reflected, that on them are hinged the future and temporary felicity of so many millions of souls.

The remaining days of Vladimir were empoisoned by domestic sorrow. The death of a son and wife were the lamentable tributes which he paid to nature. But these losses were only the precursors of a greater evil. It was reserved for his son to make him drain to the very dregs the cup of bitterness. In the distribution of his estates, Yaroslav, the eldest of his children, had obtained the fief of Novgorod. But after his possession, he re-

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fused

fused in quality of a vassal, to acknowledge the authority of his father; and, to protect himself from the consequences of this disobedience, he sought to allure the Varagians to the support of his rebellious standard. The aged monarch, forced to take the field against this unnatural son, expired on the way by the anguish of a broken heart, after a reign of forty-five years⁴⁶.

Thus fell Vladimir a victim to filial ingratitude. His virtues and vices, his reason and his passions, did not mix themselves by a nice gradation of tints, but exhibited a foul and sudden dissimilitude. Here the blackest, there the most shining colours; and both represented more striking by their nearness. Subtle, rapacious, and unfeeling, yet open, liberal, and compassionate. At the same time he so shamefully bedewed his hands in the blood of Rogvolode and his children, his rude generosity could prompt him to feast his indigent subjects under a tent, and to appoint carriages for the purpose of conveying relief to those whom sickness confined to their houses. In action he was adventurous and indefatigable: in counsel timid and lethargic. By his valour and address he first taught his soldiers to act, his enemies to fear. He colonized deserts, he depopulated towns. With a laudable emulation he introduced the rudi-

⁴⁶ Levesque, tom. i. p. 133, 134. Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 163.
ments

ments of art and science into his country, by the institution of schools; with a splendid munificence he rewarded those Greeks who decorated his cities and enlightened their inhabitants; but in recompensing these foreigners, he oppressed and impoverished his subjects. To the clergy his indulgence was unbounded, to the people his severity inflexible.

History, in recording the transactions of early ages, presents us but with few examples of princes, who, after embracing christianity, have not disgraced its doctrines by their implacable ferocity and sanguinary revenge. The great Constantine, and the no less great Clovis are conspicuous proofs how little they imbibed the true spirit of religion to which they had professed themselves sincere converts; when the first commanded the execution, or rather the murder, of his eldest and virtuous son Crispus; and the second assassinated all the princes of the Merovingian race⁴⁷. But the religious fervor of Vladimir breathed into him such counsels of charity, as were no less unwise than unexpected.

The same man who could with such criminal apathy, command the death and survey the mangled form of his brother, hesitated, for a considerable time after his conversion to

⁴⁷ See Gibbon, vol. vi. p. 320.

christianity, to punish some robbers who infested his most fertile and populous provinces : and when censured for this false humanity by his clergy, he meekly replied, " What am I, that I should condemn my fellow-creatures to death ?" Upon the whole, had fortune thrown him into a more polished age, his vices might have been softened by the plastic hand of education, his virtues might have challenged our regard and admiration ⁴⁸.

⁴⁸ By the blind superstition of the Russians, Vladimir fills a conspicuous rank in the crowded calendar of their saints. Herbestein, *Rerum Moscov. Comment.* p. 5. Their transformation of their monarch into a saint, we may excuse from considerations of their ignorance, gratitude, or devotion : but no such apology can be offered for the lavish encomiums of M. Lacombe, who should have been taught, from the evidence of their national annals, not to have summed up his character in these injudicious words : *Il mérita (speaking of Vladimir) en un mot d'être appelé de son vivant, l'apôtre et le Salomon de Russie, et d'être honoré après sa mort comme un Saint. Histoire de Russie, Paris, 1760. p. 8.*

REVOLUTION THE THIRD.

The Invasion, Conquest, and Tribute of the Tatars.

OUR attention is now arrested by a revolution the most disgraceful, and intolerable, perhaps, in the history of the world. The conquest of the Tatars¹ presented to Russia such a vast theatre of horrors, such a tragical uniformity of havock and murder, as might serve to obliterate the memory of all former devastations. Russia, for the space of two hundred years, prostrated herself at the feet of this host of oppressors; whilst its wretched inhabitants, during this ignominious period, were overshadowed in hopeless slavery and profound ignorance. Their unexpected invasion plunged the Russians again into the most lamentable barbarism, out of which they were just beginning to rise, by the benign and civilizing influence of christianity.

¹ It has been the practice, till lately, of European Authors to write *Tartars* instead of *Tatars*; but Abulgasi Bahadur Khan, a descendant of Zingis, must have known how to have spelt the true name of his countrymen; and in the *Histoire Genealogique des Tatars*, à Leyde, 1726, which was translated from his Mogul MS. the Editors, both English and French, have respected his orthography.

A slight view, therefore, of the character and manners of the nation^{*} who held the Russians in such long captivity, may not be deemed by the intelligent reader, uninteresting nor extraneous to our subject.

The ugly and deformed figures of these fatal enemies of Russia, united activity with strength; and, from the combined testimony of ancient and modern writers, we shall find, that the Tatars, in every age, are no less distinguished from the rest of mankind by their swarthy complexion, broad faces, dark hair, flat noses, little or no beard, and their small black eyes sunk into their head[†], than by the same uniform continuance of the desires and

* It is not our province to enter into a laborious disquisition concerning the origin and country of the Tatars, for by this common name we shall call them all, whether in Northern Europe or Asia. It will be sufficient, therefore, for our purposes, to observe, that the Tatars were a primitive tribe, and that after repeated contests with the Moguls, at length they became their subjects; and in whose victorious expeditions to the West, they formed the vanguard. "Ce nom," says an ingenious and learned Frenchman, "qui designe aujourd'hui toute la nation Scythique, étoit autrefois celui d'une de ses tribus particulieres. Mais comme cette tribu formoit l'avantgarde dans les expeditions des Mogols vers l'occident, les étrangers la connurent la premiere." See Freret in *Memoires de l'academie des Inscriptions*, Par. 1753. tom. xviii. p. 61.

† Ammianus Marcellinus, *Ham.* 1609. lib. 31. p. 466. and Jornandes *De Reb. Geticis*, Lugd. Batav. 1597. cap. 24. p. 69. have drawn a very disgusting picture of the countenance and manners of the Huns or Tatars. See also Buffon, *Histoire Naturelle*, Paris, 1749. tom. iii. p. 380.

enjoyments of their forefathers. Artful and impetuous in action; they were subtle and perfidious in treaty; strangers alike to the feelings of pity and remorse, to their parents and relations alone they gave exemplary proofs of a warm and permanent affection.

Taught from their infancy the double science of archery and horsemanship, they were dextrous beyond description in both of these useful exercises. They knew how to wield the sabre, and to poise the lance with an unerring hand, amidst the tumult of the day of battle; whilst their bodies were rendered firm and inured to hardships, by the different temperatures of climates, into which their restless dispositions and adventurous valour led them to migrate.

Averse to labour, and addicted to no occupations but war and hunting*, in which last exercise they displayed all the attributes of military enterprize, every menial duty was performed by their captives; while the only object of their labour seems to have been in the art of drawing from mare's milk[†] a fermented

* See Petit de la Croix, in his *Histoire du Grand Genghizcan premier Empereur des Mogols & Tartares*, à Paris, 1716, liv. iii. chap. vii. p. 331. 338. for a full account of their difficulties, dangers, and feats of valour in their grand hunting matches.

† See Herodotus, ex edit. Gronov. lib. iv. p. 4. for the cruel, though curious method, which the ancient Scythians

fermented liquor, which is of a most intoxicating quality⁶ and so well known to the Tatars and Russians, under the name of *Koumis*.

In their flocks and herds consisted their greatest riches. Their first care was, therefore, to provide a plentiful command of pasture, for these serviceable animals, who were their companions in their most distant marches. Their habitations, like their diet, were simple, and well adapted for a people who perpetually shifted their residence in search of new and bloody conquests⁷. A number of small oval tents, which were easily pitched, on moveable carriages, answered all the purposes of domestic accommodation⁸ for both

took to obtain this milk. In the same book, the father of Greek History sketches out many other domestic features of this singular race.

⁶ The chemists formerly asserted, that an ardent spirit could not be extracted from milk, until, says that learned traveller Mrs. Guthrie, they were taught the Tatar mode of distillation in the wilds of Scythia. See her *Tour through the Crimea and along the Euxine coasts in the years 1795-6*, Letter xxiii. page 227.

⁷ Homer thus describes the original Scythians :

καὶ ἀγανὲς ἱππημελῶν
Γλαῖοφάγων αἶβιον τι δακνόμενον ἀνθρώπων.

Iliad, lib. xiii.

This last epithet can by no means be annexed to the character of their descendants.

⁸ Their simple habitations are noticed by Horace :

————— *Campestres melius Scythæ,*
Quorum plaustra vagas ritè trahunt domos,
Vivant, &c.

Glasg. Lib. iii. page 163.

men

men and women, no less filthy in their persons, than brutish in their manners; and they were so severely trained up in the habits of temperance, that on any occasion of a long and sudden march, a number of little balls of dried curd, dissolved into water, not only satisfied their hunger, but sustained for many days the spirits even of the hardy Tatar. They were moreover fortified against the attacks of famine, by their immoderate and singular love of horse-flesh, to gratify which, they were invariably followed in their marches by a sufficient number of spare horses.

The religion⁹ of these warlike people cannot be viewed without astonishment. Notwithstanding their numerous idols, the first and only article of their faith seems to have been the existence of one God, the author of all good: and their ignorance is not to be remarked, when they demand health and understanding from his supreme power.

In their original state, the chief of a tribe appeared as the independent master of a numerous and separate family; but they soon

⁹ Confessano & adorano un solo Iddio—& lo chiamano buono l'alto Iddio, demandogli intelletto & sanità. See l'Historia del grand regno della China, Venezia, 1587, p. 24. A translation from the Spanish History of Gonzalez di Mendoza, a monk of the order of St. Augustine, by Francesco Avanzi, a Venetian citizen.

felt the advantages of uniting under one common head, and the title of Khan, though the order of succession is loose and precarious, embraces all the authority of a supreme leader.

In every age, the Tatars have been celebrated for their skill and boldness which they display on horseback¹⁰. Their principal strength, therefore, in the field of battle, lay in the evolution of their cavalry, which they performed with equal dexterity and effect, whether in flight or pursuit, in open combat or in secret ambush.

Thus neither granting nor expecting mercy, these conquerors of Asia rushed forward with unparalleled rapidity to success, alike attacking the most populous cities, and exploring boundless deserts, in their insatiable desire for plunder and renown¹¹.

Such

¹⁰ The Sieur de Beauplan, an intelligent French engineer, in his *Description de l'Ukraine*, Rouen, 1660, page 38, says, " Ils sont tres fort agiles à cheval, & ont une telle adresse, qu'en cheminant au grand trot ils sautent de dessus leurs chevaux lorsqu'il est hors d'haleine sur un autre qu'ils mènent à la main, à fin de mieux fuyr lorsqu'ils sont poursuivés, & le cheval qui ne sent plus son maître sous luy vient aussitost prendre la main droite de son maître, & le suit tousjours en rang mieux disposée lorsqu'il se voudra montrer par un certain agilité qui'ils ont de sauter."

¹¹ For this sketch of the character and manners of these Barbarians, we are indebted to the first book of *l'Historia della China*; to Carpin, Ascelin, Rubruquis, in the *Histoire des*

Such were the character and manners of a people, whose steps were soon to be marked with blood and desolation throughout the Russian empire. But before we enter into a minute relation of their warlike achievements, it may be necessary to throw a slight glance on the state of Russia prior to their first incursion.

Since the days of Vladimir, the principles of disorder and corruption had made rapid strides in every part of the kingdom, in consequence of that pernicious system of parceling out the state into separate principalities. Hence the sources of anarchy became innumerable. The whole strength of the great prince was employed in quelling his refractory kinsmen; while even the petty boyars, taking advantage of their endless contests, aspired openly to independence in their respective fiefs. To heighten the effects of this deplorable evil, they were amenable to no jurisdiction, if they took away the lives of their vassals. Hence the springs of industry

des Voyages, tom. vii. Cromer, Matthew à Michou, a canon and physician of Cracow, de Sarmatia Asiana atque Europæa; Aug. Vind. 1518; Histoire Genealogique des Tartars; de Russorum, Moscovitarum, et Tartarorum Religione Spizæ, 1582; Sieur de Beauplan, in his Description de l'Ukraine; and Voyages en Moscovie & Tartarie, &c. par Jean Struys, Amst. 1681.

and

and commerce became dried up by this general want of personal security.

A kingdom thus wasted by perpetual dissensions, thus composed of such discordant members, of which the chief was destitute of all power to chastise the insolent, to punish the guilty, and to protect the innocent, was ill suited to erect an impregnable barrier against the attacks of a foreign enemy, especially the Tatars, who rushed upon their foes with all the suddenness of the most destructive whirlwind.

Such was the lamentable appearance of Russia, when Yury, or George the second, Vsevolodovitz, possessed the chief principality of Vladimir¹²; a prince who blended in his person none of those qualities of genius, enterprise, and vigilance, which are so requisite to enable a man in dangerous junctures, to act with becoming vigour. He soon felt the impotence of his own authority, without having the courage or address to concert any plan of amendment. No measures, therefore,

¹² In this narrative of the subjugation of the Russians by the Tatars, I have followed solely the clear and authentic narratives of Levesque and Le Clerc, in preference to bewildering myself with the dark, contradictory, and imperfect relations of other writers on this disgraceful subject to Russia. We shall only, therefore, notice their accounts when they accord with these histories. For the conquest, servitude, and tribute of Russia by the Tatars, see the second volume of Levesque, p. 64. 104. 122. Our obligations to Le Clerc are not quite so numerous; We shall not therefore repeat his name too often, if his pages are quoted in order.

could result from such a mind to enforce obedience among his subjects, and to provide for the safety of his kingdom.

We shall, however, pass over in total silence those occurrences which gave rise to so many intestine feuds at this period, as they are marked by no features of importance, while our narrative will hasten to those events which introduced the Russians to the Tatars.

The arms of Zingis, great Khan or Em-^{1220.}peror of the Monguls and Tatars, and of his lieutenants, had successively triumphed over all that immense region which we so vaguely denominate Grand Tatar, the extensive empire of Karazm, and a considerable part of Persia and China. The efforts of his two captains, Tchenanoian and Soudai Baidour, were the most conspicuous in the subjection of the latter kingdom. When the city of Shamakee, on the western banks of the Caspian Sea, fell an easy prey to their impetuous squadrons, they took ten guides to conduct them the shortest way to the Caspian, or Albanian gates, a name so properly applied to Derbent²², situate, according to authentic travellers,

²² For a full description of the famous pass, city, ancient and modern fortifications of Derbent; we refer the reader to the following authors: Herbelot, *Bibliothèque Orientale*, p. 157. 291. 827. Petit de la Croix, *Hist. de Genghizcan*, liv. iv. chap. ix. p. 445, 446. Olearius, *Voyages*, Leid. 1719, tom. i. p. 1039. 1041. Brun, *Voyages*, Amst. 1718; tom.

vellers, on a descent between the mountains and the sea. If these generals had accomplished their project, Russia perhaps might never have been enslaved. Masters of this important place, which they were induced to acquire from the triple motives of safety, interest, and glory, they would have felt no disposition to encounter the Russians, or rather would not have known them in all their ardent spirit of adventure.

1227.

But, to the incalculable affliction of the eastern and northern countries of Europe, the Tatar generals had the inhuman precaution to cut the throat of one of the guides, and to threaten the rest with a similar fate, should they discern the smallest symptoms of treachery in their behaviour. This cruel policy did not produce the desired effect; provoked to the highest pitch of resentment by the death of their companion, they embraced the bold resolution of misleading these strangers in their way to Derbent, and of drawing them into a road where the Alains and Kaphtchaks, or whom the Russians call Polovtzi, hunters or robbers¹⁴, lay in ambush to fall upon them in their passage.

When

tom. i. p. 146, 147. Hackluyt's Voyages, vol. i. p. 346.; and that pleasing and judicious traveller, Bell of Antermomy, vol. ii. pages 350, 351.

¹⁴ In the Russian language, says Matthew Michou, chap. ii. Polovtiki interpretantur venatici seu rapaces.—De Sarmatia

When the generals perceived the deception of the guides, they were seized with the most lively emotions of fear at their critical situation. In balancing their power and resources with the enemy, they soon beheld that no alternative was left them but the infamy of a retreat, or the necessity of summoning the aid of craft instead of force ". In their exigency, the last experiment appeared to be the least productive of fatal consequences. This, therefore, the generals attempted, and the prudence of the attempt was confirmed by its ample success.

Their hopes of delivery rested solely on dividing the nations, who menaced them with such inevitable destruction; the Polovtshi were, from many concurring causes, deemed the fittest instruments for advancing their designs. To them, they sent an officer charged with splendid presents. In a well arranged speech, he imposed on their credulity, by representing the injustice of coalescing with a foreign people to overwhelm them, who were of the same race, and anxious to be united in bonds

matia Asiana & Europæa. Michou puts this expedition in 1212; Cromer in 1211; the Russian Annales in 1223, and they accord, says M. de Guignes in a note, avec l'Histoire Chinoise et l'ordre des evenemens. Se Histoire Generale des Huns, à Paris, 1757, tom. iii. liv. xv. p. 60.

¹⁵ Histoire Genealogique des Tatars, p. 309. Histoire de Genghizcan, liv. iv. chap. ix. p. 448.

of

of fraternal concord, and conscious of never having incurred their enmity, by hoisting against them the standard of war.

Influenced by the liberal gifts, and more liberal promises of this Tatarian deputy, the Polovtsi took the imprudent resolution of observing a strict neutrality between the two hostile parties. The Tatars, no longer intimidated by the prospect of sinking beneath this combined weight, rushed on the Alains with all that ardour which flows from the assurance of victory, and soon overpowered their feeble exertions. The rage of the Tatars was satiated by an almost undistinguished massacre; while the few that escaped the sword, were reduced to perpetual servitude¹⁶. Thus, in one single battle, perished a nation celebrated among those who had contributed to the downfall of the Roman empire.

Distrust, and its near ally fear, now entered the hearts of the Polovtsi, when they contemplated the resistless progress of the Tatars. Tranquil spectators of their success, they now began to disbelieve the professions of peace and attachment made by the Tatars, and lamented their rashness in dissolving their confederacy: and their situation justified their inquietude; for the Tatars, after having so

¹⁶ *Histoire Genealogique des Tatars*, p. 310.

effectually

effectually disabled the Alains, deemed it advisable to advance without delay against them; and they so far succeeded, as to drive them to the banks of the Borysthenes. Thus courted by them no longer than they conduced to their interest, and hourly exposed to their revenge, nothing remained but to consult their safety by flight, or to implore the alliance of the Russians.

The last remedy was adopted without delay. Kotiak, the most considerable of their princes, with his mournful train, hastened to his son-in-law Mstislaf, who filled the throne of Galitch, with the reputation of being endowed with courage and sagacity. Conformable to the simple and pastoral life of his nation, he first presented him with horses, wild goats, and horned cattle; he then expatiated on the impending evils which threatened to subvert the peace and liberty of his country, artfully pointing out the glory, merit, and the safety which would accrue to the Russian princes from opposing the Tatars.

The penetrating mind of the prince immediately discovered the necessity of entering into a strict bond of mutual defence against the invaders; for by redressing their grievances, he awarded the blow which threatened to reach himself. On his invitation, all the princes who were emulous to shine in mar-

tial glory assembled at Kief. In this meeting, composed of men eager to signalize themselves in arms, it may be easily supposed they soon came to the unanimous resolution of marching against the common enemy, before Russia was made the scene of destruction".

After having dispatched messengers to procure the co-operation of Yury, the chiefs separated to collect their respective forces.

One of the Polovtsian princes who accompanied Kotiak to entreat the succour of the Russians, demanded and received the sacrament of baptism; perhaps instigated to this voluntary act of conversion, from his wish to prevent their cause degenerating into the lukewarm spirit of a mere political alliance.

Already had the Russian princes conducted their numerous and impatient troops towards one of the islands of the Borysthenes, when they were met by an embassy of the Tatars. These deputies protested that their nation entertained no design inimical to the state of Russia, but that their chiefs wished only to chastise their ancient slaves, the Polovtsi, whose predatory mode of warfare the Russians themselves had frequently experienced.

" Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 491, 492.

To have listened with an ear of belief to these hollow protestations, would have justly subjected the Russians to the censure of imprudence, but to have massacred " these ostensible negotiators of peace, from the barbarous policy that no advantage might be gained in reprisals, was an act which cannot be related without exciting the strongest sentiments of abhorrence.

The Tatars, as soon as they were informed of this violent infringement of the rights of nations, sent to reproach them for the unpardonable crime which they had committed. " You have thirsted for our blood," exclaimed these new and incensed envoys; " you have assassinated our deputies; you, who are utterly ignorant of our characters; you, to whom we never rendered any evil. But heaven shall be the arbiter of our cause."

The prince of Galitch, the intrepid Mstislaf, who had not yet levied all his forces, eager for the applause of the confederacy, was the first to encounter their formidable antagonists; followed by a band of veterans, who amounted

" Cromer thus corroborates this violation of the law of nations: " *Quin legatos Tartarorum monentes, ne sese eo bello implicarent, contra jus gentium interemere.*" *De Reb. Polon. lib. vii. p. 191.*—See also Michou, chap. ii. *De Sarmatia Asiana atque Europa*; and De Guignes *Hist. Gen. des Huns*, tom. iii. liv. xv. p. 61.

" *Le Clerc*, tom. i. p. 493.

only to one thousand men, he passed the Dnieper, fell on a detached corps of the Tatars, routed them, and obtained the person of their commander, whose misfortune of falling alive into the hands of the conquerors, procured him the torture, and then death from the hands of the inhuman Polovtsi.

In a short time after, the troops of Galitch arrived. The mode of their route was remarkable. Their army of twenty thousand men embarked in two thousand vessels²⁰, or more properly canoes, made of a single tree; and after having descended to the mouth of the Dniester, the ancient Tyras, they entered the Euxine, from whence they proceeded without impediment, up the Borysthenes, as far as the seven or thirteen ridges of rocks²¹ which form the famous cataraets, and embarrass its navigation for the space of fifteen leagues. There began the toils and difficulties of their journey, which were not ended by re-ascending of the river, and joining the Russian army, until they had dragged their barks a considerable distance over land. Some inconsiderable nations, urged by a just sense of

²⁰ M. De Guignes in his *Hist. Gen. des Huns*, p. 61. r. reduces their fleet of boats to a thousand.

²¹ See Constantine de Administr. Imp. cap. ix. who mentions only seven cataraets; while the Sieur de Beauplan, in his *Description de l'Ukraine*, enumerates thirteen, p. 5.

the common danger, resorted to the Russian standard.

All the troops were now assembled in arms, and all had passed the Dnieper, when intelligence was received, that a body of Tatars had advanced to reconnoitre their movements. Some young princes hastened to attack them by the command of Mstislaf. The Tatars were repulsed; and the Russian camp feasted for many days on the quantity of cattle which they had been constrained to abandon amidst their dismay and confusion.

After this successful engagement, the Russians pursued their march for the space of ten days unmolested²². They then began to indulge in the vain and dangerous reflection, that they had overawed their foes: whereas the no less sagacious, than enterprising Tatars, had soon discerned that their own ignorance of the country formed the safeguard of the Russians; and until this local inconvenience was obviated, they would not only fight to a manifest disadvantage, but expose themselves to the insupportable shame of a complete overthrow. They retreated therefore to allure them to their final ruin.

When they had nearly reached the borders of the Kalka, whose deep, though narrow streams enter the Euxine Sea, not far from

²² *Histoire Genealogique des Tatars*, p. 313.

the mouth of the winding Tanais, they at last espied an advanced detachment of the Tatars. Their situation offered no alternative, but a renewal of hostilities. The Tatars, however, suffered themselves to be driven back with ease, and the Russians crossed the Kalka without impediment.

By a misfortune, inherent to great confederacies, the army was weakened by the discord of the princes of Kief and Galitch. This latter general laboured more to frustrate the success of his colleagues, than to promote the public service. Under the influence of this unworthy and fatal idea, that his fame would be sullied, should his competitor participate in the approaching battle, he made the necessary dispositions for attack with the other princes, before the sovereign of Kief had commenced any preparatory movement. Never did armies, nor princes, encounter each other with a more determined courage, or with a more feeling opinion of the merciless revenge which would be inflicted on the conquered party. Both sides, therefore, vied with each other in mutual resentment. For a long time, this important conflict was doubtful. The fortune of the day was at last decided in favour of the Tatars, by the artless valour of the Polovtsi, who formed the vanguard on this memorable day. With impetuous fury they attacked the centre ranks
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of the enemy, but were soon driven back by their firm battalions, and, in the disorder of their retreat, they threw the whole Russian army into confusion. The wary Tatars seized the decisive moment, and, by one furious and irresistible charge, they rendered their weakness irretrievable.

The rout then became universal. The prince of Galitch, unmindful of his former achievements, abandoned his station in the most dishonourable manner. With a handful of soldiers he fled to the banks of the river Dnieper, secured the vessels necessary for escape, and then issued an inglorious order to commit the rest to the flames. Those who imitated his shameful example, with every exertion heightened by despair and necessity, could only rescue a few vessels from the consuming fire, while the safety of Mitislaf must have been embittered with the reflection of having occasioned the greatest part of the Russian army either to perish under the unrelenting sword of the conquerors, or to precipitate themselves into the waters, by his ill-timed and cowardly flight.

If the tradition of the times may be accredited, Russia bewailed the loss of more than ninety thousand of her gallant sons in this disastrous action. The vigorous charge of the Tatars would not perhaps have been made with such successful consequences, had

the prince of Kief, instead of fortifying himself by fascines of earth, descended from the mountain, on which he was posted with fresh troops, to the critical succour of his allies.

The triumphant army then formed itself into two divisions, one of which pursued the vanquished, and the other surrounded the prince of Kief in his fastnesses. For a long time he defended himself with all the obstinate bravery of a man, who contends not for victory, or for honour, but for life. But when he beheld the return of the other division, whose late slaughter had only more sharpened their appetite for revenge, he then felt that the most invincible valour could not withstand the weight of such a conjunctive force.

Destitute of resources, and hopeless of tiring, by a steady resistance, the patience of the besiegers, the unfortunate prince of Kief, saw himself reduced to the mortifying necessity of humbly suing for pardon and peace. The Tatar general solemnly swore, that his own person, and the lives of his companions, should be preserved from danger, on the payment of a stipulated ransom: oaths, that were only given to betray; for the moment their designs were counteracted by them, that very moment their politic consciences ceased to remember them.

No sooner then had the ruler of Kief, his son-in-law, and a prince named Doubrovski, marched out from their fortress, in the full confidence of receiving a friendly reception, than the perfidious Tatars butchered the soldiers, furiously threw the princes on the ground, and covering them with those planks on which they seated themselves to celebrate their triumphal festival, thus stifled these unfortunate victims²³.

This act sealed the fate of Russia. So panic struck were all ranks by the greatness and extent of their calamity, that the hopes of retrieving their disgrace seemed as likely to be realized as the visionary dreams of insanity. This vast body beheld itself on the brink of ruin, and yet wanted strength and courage to make one daring effort to save itself. The people, at the approach of the sanguinary Tatars, instead of adopting any counsels expressive of vigour and firmness, discovered all the impotent behaviour of fear and folly. From their cities they advanced to meet them with the cross and images, as if they were about to greet the arrival of their hereditary prince. These outward demonstrations of respect and submission, from places where they expected to have met a strong resistance, surprised, yet did not pacify

²³ Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 495, 496.

the Tatars. Their breasts, so justly accused of being inaccessible to pity, gave no quarter to these unarmed and unresisting multitudes. They likewise ravaged all the country around them. Villages and cities equally experienced the miseries of indiscriminate pillage²⁴.

To give the reader some insight into the general carnage, which attended their rage of spoil and conquest, it is calculated that in the principality of Kief alone expired sixty thousand of her inhabitants. From thence the Tatars pursued their destructive career even to Novgorod Severski, in little Russia, to the north-east of Tchernigof. Then, at last wearied with the labour of extermination, they joyfully returned through the country of the Kaptchacks, to join Zingis Khan, whom they met on the frontiers of Great Bucharia. Astonished at the prodigious number of prisoners presented to him by his generals, he publicly pronounced their praises, and loaded them with distinguished honours for their services²⁵.

The prince of Vladimir, the chief sovereign of Russia, whose efforts of valour against the

²⁴ "Elle engloutit ses provinces, elle désola les villes, & les campagnes, laissant partout les traces les plus affreuses de son impétuosité," is a very just and spirited description of the Tatar progress by Lacombe, p. 22.

²⁵ Histoire Genealogique des Tatars, p. 314, 315.

Tatars should have surpassed his other confederates, sunk into greater indolence than ever, as the danger became more threatening; and, contrary to his promises of personal union, committed his whole authority to others: while this violation of his agreement became still more reprehensible, from the dilatory manner in which he imparted his much desired aid. On their road, his tardy troops were met by many of their countrymen, whose looks alone presaged the fatal issue of the day. Infected however with the degenerate apathy of their master, they turned their backs on the first hearing of the news, instead of resolving to make one bold push to retrieve the national disgrace.

On the moment the Tatars had quitted this destined region of servitude, the struggles of dissension revived among the chieftains and people: the effects of the pernicious nature of feudal institutions, which are equally inimical to commerce, justice, and subordination.

We turn aside, therefore, with pleasure, from these uniform and wearisome disturbances which so gradually impaired the strength of Russia, to step for a moment into the paths of virtue.

Yaroslav, prince of Novgorod, in the wantonness of his caprice, had required the citizens of Pleskof to destroy the new-erected city of Riga. The inhabitants of Pleskof, who were slightly

slightly connected with the town, returned this answer to the prince: " You are wise, and therefore ought to know, that all men are brothers. Christians and infidels, we all form but one family; how great then would be our injustice to bring bloodshed to those who reject our belief; how culpable our presumption to punish their errors. To preserve unbroken the gentle ties of peace, is therefore far more amiable, and far more prudent: by such a conduct they will be taught to cherish and respect our virtues. Their hearts will then be touched, and that friendship which they must conceive for us will imperceptibly pass to the love of our religion."

These edifying²⁶ remonstrances rendered the citizens of Novgorod unpropitious to the oppressive desires of their leader; yet how ill-constructed is the mound which protects sense from the assaults of folly. These same Novgorodians, whose minds were so deeply penetrated by the counsels of the inhabitants of Pleskof, had burnt the preceding year an infinite number of people exposed to the suspicion of practising witchcraft.

1230. In a short time after these occurrences, a dreadful famine laid waste the republic of

²⁶ " Nous pouvons être étonnés," says the judicious Levesque, " que des Russes du treizième siècle aient parlé avec tant de sagesse, que des moines du même siècle & du même pays aient conservé leur discours, dans les chroniques, & qu'un patriarche nous l'ait transmis, tom. ii. p. 76.

Novgorod, while an earthquake, which was felt throughout the principal cities of Russia, cast an additional horror over this period of calamity and disgrace. In the midst of these scenes of terror and confusion, a crowd of princes²⁷ disputed the precarious honour of governing that unfortunate republic. But while each was preparing to support his pretensions with the sword, the ordinary umpire of disputes in these uncivilized times, their tremendous foe once more rushed in upon them, and silenced their tumults and factions, by involving all the contending parties in the same destruction.

In the uninterrupted series of success, which accompanied the late outrages of the Tatars, they alone retained the Kaptchak²⁸ which Touchi, the eldest of the sons of Zingis Khan, received in appanage, as a reward²⁹ for his gallant behaviour in several actions. But death soon deprived him of this rich gift of parental affection. He was succeeded by his son Batou or Baaty, whom

²⁷ "Les Seigneurs Russiens," observes Lacombe with great propriety and truth. "joignèrent encore aux maux d'une domination étrangère, les calamités les plus grandes, des guerres intestines," p. 25.

²⁸ The Kaptchak is the district lying between the Don and Yaik, more properly Ural. See a note in Mrs. Guthrie's Tour through the Crimea and along the Euxine Coast, in the years 1795 6. Letter xiii. p. 46.

²⁹ See Hist. du Grand Ginghizcan, p. 497.

Providence had raised up to become the scourge of Russia; and none indeed possessed better requisites to ensure success, and to command the fear and obedience of a mighty host. He was skilful in action, patient in fatigue, and revengeful without bounds and without scruples³⁰: while his uncommon foresight in action could only be surpassed by his intrepidity. When the rage of battle had subsided, his cruelty was still as unappeased, as his love of dominion unbounded: nor were these odious vices softened by the shades of any private virtues. We shall therefore find, in his character, much to detest, and scarce any thing to admire.

After a festival of forty days, Batou set forwards on this great expedition; and such was the active spirit and unchecked career of his innumerable troops, that in less than six years,

³⁰ "Et gladius ejus non parcebat sexui vel ætati," says a writer well acquainted with his butchering disposition, and who saw thousands of his countrymen sacrificed to his insatiable ambition. See M. Rogerius de Destructione Hungariæ per Tartaros, p. 184. in the *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum*, Francofurti, 1600. John de Plano Carpini, whose zeal for his religion led him to visit the court of the Great Khan in the thirteenth century, gives us this short portrait of the Conqueror of Russia. "Idem vero Bathy satis est hominibus suis benignus, valde tamen ab eis timetur, et in pugna est crudelissimus, sagax est multum et astutissimus in bello." See the 1st volume of Hakluyt, cap. xxii. p. 48.

says Gibbon³¹, they had measured a line of ninety degrees of longitude, a fourth part of the circumference of the globe.

In the reign, therefore, of Oçtai, the immediate successor of Zingis Khan, his nephew Batou meditated and atchieved the conquest of Russia. In his rapid march to the west, no valour could effectually stop the spreading torrent of their invasion. After traversing the extensive river Kama, the capital of the Bulgarians was soon taught to acknowledge the force of his invincible squadrons. Yet the Russians still viewed, with torpid indifference their overwhelming incursions; and the grand prince of Vladimir³² celebrated with pomp, on the edge of a precipice, the nuptials of two of his sons.

Six hundred thousand Tatars now advanced, under the standard of Batou, along the banks of the majestic Volga, without beholding even the face of an enemy. When this gigantic army had approached the principality of Riazan, over which two brothers

³¹ Vol. xi. p. 419.

³² The title of Grand Duke, which has been so improperly substituted by some writers for Veliki Knez, or Grand Prince, was absolutely unknown to the ancient Russians, says Mr. Tooke, in a note of his second volume, p. 222.; and in modern times, when they had more communications with the western nations of Europe, they were obliged to borrow that appellation from the German language.

ruled,

ruled, they sent to them a woman ³³ professing the functions of a priestess; and two deputies, to demand the tenth part of all their wealth.

The sovereigns of Riazan apprised the neighbouring princes of the claims of this whimsical embassy. All answered with indignation, they were ready to meet with fortitude, that danger which perhaps they believed impossible to shun. Their different forces were then mustered with haste; they advanced towards Veronetz to oppose the foe, and sent, at the same time, to the Court of Vladimir, to demand his assistance. Instead of improving these precious moments, by forming a general union of councils and parties, Yury loitered away the time in careless security, and with a vanity which obscured all sight of the gulf open before him, he declared, that should the enemy have the presumption to molest his repose, his own forces were alone sufficient to repel their most impetuous attacks. The other princes, influenced by their fears, or by their intestine feuds, too successfully followed this fatal example.

³³ Those women who became subject to hysterical fits, are readily invested with the Priesthood, because these convulsions are interpreted as the exterior signs of prophetic virtue among a people in the blind credulity of ignorance. See Levesque, tom. ii. p. 80.

Thus did the foolish pride of Yury dissolve a confederacy, which, had it been adhered to with constancy and spirit, would not only have enabled them to make a glorious stand, but perhaps might have honourably filled up that vast and conspicuous space in the history of their country, which is now occupied by the ignominy of Tatar servitude.

The princes of Riazan, deserted by the other sovereigns, hastened to shut themselves in their different towns ; and we must applaud their prudence, which led them to avoid in the open plain, an enemy equally formidable by their bravery and numbers. The fate of Riazan depended on the skill and courage of the eldest brother. With that celerity which springs from the anticipation of a rich plunder, the Tatars invested the condemned city. For sixteen days the contest was fiercely maintained without intermission ; but a mortal wound, which the gallant prince received, in transporting his person to the scenes of danger on the ramparts³⁴, terminated his life and the last hopes of the city. Riazan was then taken by assault. Enraged at their obstinate defence, every crime was practised, by the implacable Tatars, which could disgrace the name of men. The widow of the prince, the several princesses, and all the inhabitants,

³⁴ Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 499.

were put to the sword, after enduring every species of torture which could be devised by their inventive cruelty : while the women of the most exquisite beauty were first dishonoured by their lust, and then received the sentence of death. After the unrestrained indulgence of all their sensual passions, the city was razed to the ground, and these conquerors proceeded to fresh expeditions of blood and slaughter.

The slothful Yury was at last aroused by the impending ruin of the princes of Riazan ; he detached an army to their assistance, under the nominal command of his son Vsevolod, while the important station of counsellor to this youthful prince was held by Vòyevode of the name of Glebovitch. They only arrived in time to behold the city smoking in its ruins. Vsevolod then turned his succours toward Kolomna, which was guarded by Roman, brother to the prince who fell so nobly in the defence of Riazan. The Tatars rapidly advanced ; the Russians struggled in vain to oppose their innumerable squadrons : at last overpowered, their retreat became a disorderly flight into the city, while destruction sat on the swords of the victors. Roman, the Veyevode Glebovitch, and a large body of his adherents, fatiated the rage of the pursuers. Vsevolod alone, with a small number of his companions in misfortune, escaped

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to Vladimir, and Kolomna became the reward of these warlike shepherds of the north. Flushed with success, and eager for a repetition of carnage, the conquerors passed on to Moscow.

This destined capital of a great empire²⁵ could boast the greatness of her population, even at this early and distracted period; but the courage of her inhabitants was relaxed by the terror of the Tatar name. After a faint and unavailing resistance, she thought to have deprecated their wrath by a timely surrender; but compassion to the defenceless were words never admitted into the mouths of these victorious savages. The young Vladimir, the son of Yury, had the misfortune to see his life respected; and he who rose in the morning a prince, wore the next day, by the vicissitude of fortune, the habit of a Tatar slave.

His wretched father learnt, with all the swiftness which accompanies disastrous news, that Riazan and Moscow had deeply to deplore the prowess of the Tatar troops. If he despaired of overcoming the strength and fierceness, the discipline and temper of the Tatars, the common danger, and a sense of

²⁵ The foundations of Moscow were cast by Yury the First in 1157, but did not till the fourteenth century become the seat of empire. See the first and second volumes of Levesque.

shame ought at least to have stopped his flight from his capital, which he knew could not be abandoned without the utmost dishonour. Instead of manfully preparing every expedient to prevent, or at least to protract his ruin; instead of inspiring his troops by a display of bravery, he basely forsook his subjects and family, in the midst of a host of perils, consigned his sons Vsevolod and Mstislaf to the direction of a Voyevode; crossed the Volga in his way to his nephews, and with them awaited, in trembling anxiety, the uncertain issue of fraternal succour.

The enterprizing Batou, breathing terror and destruction, appeared under the walls of the devoted capital. To one of the gates he conducted his illustrious captive Vladimir. In the pallid hue which overspread his countenance, might be seen his treatment from the rigorous Tatars. His brothers, stirred up to a pitch of madness at this object of fallen greatness, proposed an immediate sally; but the timid caution of the Voyevode checked the generous rage of their passions; which, at this moment, had it been poured out against the foe, might have turned the tide of fortune.

Batou, who never suffered any of his measures to be disconcerted by the interference of humanity, expected that the inhabitants would lay down their arms, at the sight
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of Vladimir. But when he saw their looks betray neither submission nor dismay, he made his dispositions for the siege.

That happy art of adapting the talents of men to their proper province, which can only be acquired by a vigorous and combining mind, and which so greatly tends to lull all contention asleep, and to give an additional obedience to the authority of the monarch in every great occasion, we cannot suppose to find in the mean understanding of Yury. The Voyevode, to whom he had committed the protection of his sons and capital, was far more calculated for the superstition of the cloister, than adequate to a trust which demanded all the talents of an experienced general. His cowardice, rather than his prudence, had induced him to restrain the laudable impetuosity of the princes. And his impolitic fanaticism had not hesitated to publish his firm belief, that in the invasion of the Tatars might be discerned the avenging arm of Omnipotence.

After these rash and unguarded words had escaped him, which struck ten thousand terrors into the hearts of the superstitious people, he could not be surprised to find, when they were summoned to action, in the place of that desperate valour so commonly displayed by men who fight from necessity, a conduct

which sought more to propitiate the mercy of the enemy by supplication, than to overcome them by resolute opposition.

The Tatars quietly prepared their machines, and made, at leisure, their dispositions; while the infatuated people, instead of molesting them, by frequent and furious sorties, and bending their bows, and directing their javelins against them from the tops of the battlements, passed all their days and nights in the churches, whose walls resounded with their abject wailings.

During the intermediate space of these preparations, Batou had detached a considerable part of his invincible army to subdue the city of Susdal; its fate furnished no exemption to their general success. On their return, the inhabitants of Vladimir rightly estimated the bloody extent of their conquest, from the small number of prisoners in their train.

The besiegers had now finished their dispositions, and the plan of attack was digested and commanded. From the top of the walls the citizens beheld their operations, and yet they could not be awakened from their fatal lethargy. The princes and princesses, and all who possessed stations of great power and trust, anticipating the horrors of their doom, retired to the church to receive the monachal tonsure from the hands of the trembling arch-

REVOLUTIONS OF RUSSIA.

archbishop². Alas! how deplorable is the fate of that country, which beholds its welfare committed, in the time of imminent danger, to the care of one man, in whose breast resides no sense of shame, and whose ignorance and superstition destroy every laudable feeling! for the people will always be found to be influenced and regulated by the passions, whether good or bad, of their leader.

At length the dread hour arrived, when the intrepid Tatars began their great and general attack, by ascending at once their walls, and breaking down their gates, the only bulwarks of the cowardly city.

The historians, in whose pages we find the description of a grand assault, have generally been enabled, from the ordinary course of events which happen in that destructive period of human misery, to sketch out some groupe of patriots, whose magnanimous exploits live in the memory and admiration of future ages. But the pusillanimity of the Russians has deprived us of so honourable a narration.

After a passage was thus made on all sides by the furious Tatars, the scene of slaughter

² Qui leur promettoit la palme du martyr. Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 500. For what, we should like to know—Their *genuine display of piety*, or their *unexampled magnanimity of behaviour*.

HISTORY OF THE .

was then opened, while the inhabitants, after a feeble shew of resistance, instead of being animated with the courage of despair, stood, like a herd of timid cattle, submissive to the knife of murder. To heighten this spectacle of horrors, the Tatars, in order that no single inhabitant, by any fortuitous circumstance, might elude their revenge, after leaving the streets flowing with a torrent of blood, set fire to the buildings, whose combustible materials, of fir wood³⁷, must have soon caused the flames to spread over the whole face of the city. Those who escaped the massacre were consumed by the spreading flames; and many, to be delivered at once from the torments of fear, threw themselves on the sword of their brutal conquerors. The princes Vsevolod and Mstislaf, in leading a crowd of citizens to the centre of the city, exhibited such manifest confusion in their flight, that the Tatars mingled in their disordered ranks, and massacred the two princes.

With a thundering force the massy doors of the cathedral were burst open. These destroyers of mankind, in vain, searched every part of the sacred edifice for their allotted prey. The archbishop, the grandees, and

³⁷ The fir-tree was principally used by the Russians in the construction of their miserable edifices. See Earl of Carliste's three Embassies. Lond. 1669. p. 33, 34.—135, 136.

the princesses, were secreted from their fury in a private part of the choir. The disappointed Tatars cried out, that if they abandoned their asylum, they should have mercy shewn to them. But as their protestations were disregarded, they then determined that no age, rank, or sex should experience their clemency. To carry this decree into effect, the inexorable Tatars heaped up piles of dry wood within and around the cathedral, and involved the whole in one general conflagration³⁸.

No curious or durable monuments of human art adorned the conquest of the Tatars, but the silence of death alone, and the most hideous solitude, which the imagination of man can conceive, alone witnessed their victorious march³⁹. After leaving scarce any vestige to tell that the city of Vladimir had ever existed, they then distributed themselves into several corps, to widen and expedite their slaughter.

Yury, occupied in concerting measures with his brother Sviatoslav, whose inheritance was

³⁸ Levesque twice repeats the destruction of the capital, tom. ii. p. 86, 87.

³⁹ “*Vastum ubique silentium, secreti colles, fumantia procul tecta, nemo exploratibus obviis,*” is what a renowned historian of antiquity calls *faciem victoriae*; and it may be said to have been emphatically so with the Tatars. See the immortal life of Agricola, by Tacitus, à Brotier, tom iv. chap. xxxviii. p. 104.

the city of Yourief, and ignorant of the position of the enemy, learnt at the same time with astonishment and horror, the ruin of his capital, and the melancholy end of his wife and children. These sad and unexpected tidings, at last called forth all his dormant courage. Resolved to be avenged on the authors of his misery, or not to survive the fall of his country, he harangued his assembled chieftains with that irresistible fervour, which aroused the valiant, convinced the prudent, and encouraged the faint hearted.

During the time that Yury awaited to be seconded by the powerful efforts of his other brother, Yaroslav, prince of Novgorod, the Tatars approached with their usual rapidity, which made it impossible to decline a battle. The prince himself led them on to the attack, and by a superior display of enthusiasm and skill, he seemed anxious to atone for his past misconduct⁴⁰. His men, inflamed by his example, fought with all the firmness which the importance of the engagement demanded; and, until their prince fell, the glory of the day was doubtful. But on his death, resistance ceased on every part of his army; and the Russians, regardless of their former bravery, fled, while a merciless slaughter was

⁴⁰ Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 501.

inflicted

inflicted on them by their more active pursuers.

The destructive spirit which distinguished the irruption of the Tatars, clearly proves that they had no desire to preserve the subjugated country, but only to waste all before them with fire and sword, and then to migrate to some more fertile climate. In these convulsions of Russia, the people of the different sovereignties, destitute of all mutual concord, and even intercourse, were insensible to the want of a plan of general union, in order to maintain the well-being and independence of their country. Some fled with trepidation from the cry of danger, others remained in languid and stupid inaction, while few could be celebrated for their determination to sell their blood at the dear bought price of reciprocal vengeance.

Perhaps in no settled design, but only in ^{1238.} obedience to the suggestions of sanguinary caprice, or perhaps also in the view of cutting off their last resources, Batou turned his arms against Torjok, a dependent city of the republic of Novgorod. But the inhabitants, probably supported by the hope of a strong reinforcement from Novgorod, exerted themselves with extraordinary courage and activity in the defence of their town. The whole force of Batou surrounded their walls; and yet they were neither disheartened by the terror,

terror, which the Tatar name inspired, nor dismayed by their hostile engines, which were as new as they were fatal to them. After a siege of fifteen days, their walls were reduced to a heap of ruins, and the inhabitants exhibited to the last a memorable lesson of zeal and firmness.

On their march towards Novgorod, they butchered every unfortunate creature, whom chance had thrown in their way; innocent victims, who possessed neither power nor intention to impede their inhuman career. But no spectacle of human woe could divert them from their steady course of murder, and they bathed their weapons in the bosoms of those who knelt with outstretched hands to supplicate for mercy.

The active Tatar had now advanced within sixty miles of Novgorod, and soon the inhabitants of that trembling city expected to see him rush to their gates; when, on a sudden, he gave the word of command for his troops to wheel about, and evacuate the Russian empire. The authors of the Russian Chronicles, who rarely presume to assign the causes of events, and whenever they do arrogate to themselves the philosophic office, generally wander from the beacon of truth, ascribe to a miracle the retreat of the conqueror.

The cause of this sudden departure from Russia is thus very darkly and absurdly explained;

plained; but a more rational mind will be inclined to suspect, that the ferocious Batou would have swept every remains of national freedom from Novgorod, if his presence, perhaps, had not been impatiently required by his sovereign, to stop the course of some domestic rebellion.

But the incalculable fatigue, and the profusion of blood which it cost the Tatars to overcome a small town, the inhabitants of which knew the value of their liberties, incontestibly demonstrates, that had Russia only carried on her operations under the form of a national confederacy, she would not have deplored that most degrading of all human evils, the loss of liberty. The name of the city, which acted with such force and effect, was Kosefsk: its situation was so obscure, that it never has been described by any geographer. The scantiness of our information only enables us to observe, that the Tatars visited this place on their return.

A young prince presided in this confined feat of valour. The inhabitants, though few in number, were strengthened by a love of glory, and by an intrepid resolution, the only hopes of their safety. Batou employed all his forces, all his art, and all his military engines, and yet beheld, with indignation and astonishment, the city still aspiring to independence.

dependence. After being exposed to a siege of seven weeks, in which the enemy poured on them their fiercest rage, the walls were at last crumbled into dust; not an action could even then be imputed to them unworthy of their former courage. After leaving their wives, infants, and old men amidst the fallen walls, and solemnly swearing, with one voice, to taste the sweetness of revenge, in the agonies of approaching death, they all came forth from the city, destroyed the machines of the besiegers, mixed themselves in their ranks, and stained with their own blood, and the blood of the enemy, bravely received, standing and fighting, their glorious death.

The pride of the Tatars could not be elated by this long contested victory, as they did not become masters of the town of Koselsk without having to regret the loss of four thousand men, and several of their princes. On entering the demolished town, they doomed to one general slaughter the whole female race, and those aged citizens whose inability to carry arms has hindered them from being compared with their countrymen, to the brightest example of ancient valour.

1238. When their rage had been completely glutted by this inhuman carnage, they returned along the banks of the Volga, to their chosen residence.

fidence in the country of the ancient Bulgarians.

THE hurricane which passed over Russia, was not considered by its princes, as the prelude of a more dreadful calamity, but only as a momentary evil. No sooner, therefore, did Yaroslav, prince of Novgorod, receive intelligence of the retreat of the Tatars, than with all the rash confidence of ambition, he hastened to grasp the fallen sceptre of his ill-fated brother; and, in the mean time seated on the throne of Novgorod his son Alexander, who was soon to act a conspicuous character in this turbulent period. When arrived at Vladimir, which had felt in every part the cruelty of the foe, he cleansed the city filled with dead bodies, restored her smoking edifices, and recalled her scattered inhabitants; and, as if the state, which was gradually rising from her ashes, had been already oppressed by the weight of her immense forces, he recommended that system of distributing appanages to the princes of his blood, a system which leaves in its various ramifications nothing to counteract the power of the aristocracy, and renders it impossible for the sovereign, in the day

day of misfortune and anarchy to act with vigour, or with success.

But the conduct of Yaroslav, in this important crisis, neither displayed the sagacity of a statesman, or the generosity of a hero. His next act was to deliver himself up to the folly of revenge, when every sense of that passion ought to have been lost in the undivided and laudable pursuit of restoring the health of the state. A petty prince had provoked his indignation; his troops, yet smarting with the wounds of the Tatars, were called on to waste their returning strength in following this enemy to Galitch, where Yaroslav had the ignoble satisfaction of making him and his wife prisoners. But the moment was arrived which exposed to him all the deceitfulness of the late calm.

Russia was now again to feel the second dreadful shock of Tatar invasion. The impetuous Batou, who grasped at the conquest of all Russia, dispatched an army to the south-east part of this unhappy country. Without a blow, Péreiaslaw yielded to the renowned name of the Tatar. Tchernigof, after a slight resistance, was delivered up to fire and sword. The bishop of this town had been surprised and captured. But, strange to relate, he found mercy from the conquerors. On all occasions he was treated with marked respect,

respect, and even restored to liberty before they revisited their country ⁴¹.

Shortly after this expedition, Batou dispatched Mangou Khan to make an attempt on Kief, where reigned Mikhail, a prince, whose conduct proved him to be ignorant of the qualities of a sovereign and warrior. More eager, for the first time, to possess, than to extirpate, and likewise unprovided with a sufficient number to storm the city, he invited the prince to submission. Instead of profiting from this manifest indication of the weakness of the enemy, he pursued a conduct pregnant with guilt and cowardice. By his command, the deputies of Mangou were assassinated; and after this deed, which must seem so odious to a civilized age, he ignominiously abandoned his city, and hid his head in Hungary ⁴². Doubtless, the Russians might with justice, charge their conquerors of exhibiting in their conduct no regard to the principles of clemency, yet they might equally recriminate on this occasion. The Tatars, defeated in the hopes of punishing the treachery of the

⁴¹ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 97, 98.

⁴² Histoire générale des Huns, tom. iii. liv. xv. p. 95. But the name of *espions*, which M. de Guignes bestows on these murdered delegates of Mangou, ill accords either with their rank or employment.

prince, could only appease their revenge by an indiscriminate plunder of the country.

It is a singular though uninteresting spectacle, to behold the Russians, when they no longer trembled under the lash of Tatar oppression, return to their odious and fatal scenes of contention. The moment Mikhail had deserted his capital, a prince named Rostislaf, repaired thither to profit by his departure. But he was soon pushed aside by a more powerful and sagacious rival, who contrived to take possession of the prize, and then discreetly removed his person from the place of danger, entrusting the government of his new acquired spoil, to a *Namestnik*, an officer who corresponds in rank and power with the lord lieutenants of our sovereign.

Could the city of Kief have been preserved by a single hero, it would have been preserved by Demetrius, for such was the name of the *Namestnik*, whose daring valour extorted even the admiration of the enemy itself. Batou inflamed by the recital of Mangou, came in person to undertake the siege of Kief. His most skilful generals, and a formidable army, confident in its own strength, attended his destructive footsteps⁴³. Before the commencement

⁴³ John de Planco Carpini, who traversed the country of Kief, six years after the destructive visit of Batou, points out

mencement of his operations, he offered the inhabitants the most favourable terms on their surrender. On refusing to listen to his overtures, he formed the blockade; and directed his engines against the walls on all sides. A breach was at last made by the indefatigable Tatars, and they mounted impetuously to the assault. The besieged, after successfully combating on the breach the whole day, raised with admirable dispatch, in the secrecy of night, a wall around their church St. Sophia; encouraged by the erection of this new asylum, they stood at the dawn of day on the breach, vigorous, and powerful.

Demetrius, by his skill and courage, inspired his countrymen with redoubled fortitude; and Batou, for the first time, beheld the Russians invincible. But the Russian commander was at last obliged to retire, from the number of his wounds; and on his retreat, the fortune of the Tatar once more prevailed. The citizens, no longer animated by his presence to the hopes of conquest and revenge, abandoned the breach, and took refuge in the new constructed intrenchment. In the con-

to us the many scattered monuments left by this ravaging conqueror in his progress to the devoted capital. "Innumerable capita, et ossa hominum mortuorum jacentia, super campum, inveniebamus." Hackluyt's Voyages, vol. i. cap. xv. p. 44.

fusion of their terror, they flocked in crowds to the roof of St. Sophia; which, unable to sustain so great weight, soon gave way, and proved the death of those who had assembled there for their safety, and likewise broke down a part of the new wall. Thus the Tatars became masters of the city, and in the fulness of their conquest, they did not wish to depart from their wonted character of cruelty. But Batou, actuated by more political principles, interposed his authority, protected the inhabitants, for the first time, from the massacre of his followers, and suffered them to remain in the city⁴⁴. After he had committed the jurisdiction of this place to his lieutenants, he then besieged and subdued the cities of Galitch and Vladimir of Volynia.

Batou shewed himself worthy of the conquest of Kief, by his treatment of its gallant defender. He addressed himself always in the flattering language of respect, and exchanged the name of captive, for the more honourable appellation of friend; and, if we may credit the report of these times, it was by the advice of the brave Demetrius (who wished to avert the havoc of their arms from his countrymen) that Batou spread terror and desolation

⁴⁴ The words of Michou would lead us to suppose, that these barbarous enemies of Russia reduced the city to ashes. *Kiow funditus deleverunt*, chap. ii.

throughout the kingdoms of Hungary and Poland⁴⁵.

It is the common lot of nations, and of individuals, when their power is nearly broken, to behold a crowd of enemies start up with eagerness to seize the scanty remnant of their possessions. To this state of infelicity and degradation the Russians were reduced by the invasion of the Tatars; all their neighbours pressed forward to enrich themselves from their disasters. The Lithuanians first assaulted Smolensk. But a complete overthrow from the hands of Yaroslav, was the penalty of this rashness. Their defeat however did not check the ambition of other nations, superiors to them in numbers and resources; but the prospect of their baneful growth, was at last entirely darkened by the splendid achievements of Alexander, prince of Novgorod, and son of the sovereign of Vladimir.

In the twelfth century⁴⁶, some merchants of Bremen, bound to Wisby in the isle of Gothland, became known to Tschude, or to those provinces which we now comprehend under the name of Livonia and Estonia, by a furious tempest, which drove their vessels to the mouth of the Dwina. Received at first by

⁴⁵ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 99, 100.

⁴⁶ Coxe's Northern Tour, fifth edition, vol. ii p. 233.
See also Lacombe Histoire de Russie, p. 25.

the natives as enemies, they however gained their esteem, and opened with them a beneficial traffic. The profits they derived from this commercial intercourse soon excited the attention of other merchants of their nation, who made some inconsiderable establishments along the borders of the Dwina; and this spirit of mercantile enterprise was imbibed by a considerable number of German families.

Not long after this settlement, a band of knights was instituted for the propagation of the faith in these pagan provinces, and in the end, had the distinguished honour of being incorporated in the Teutonic order, as a reward for their important services. The cross and sword were the distinctive sign of this order, from whence they took the name of the Knights of the Sword⁴⁷. These martial apostles did not relax from their holy warfare, until they had effectually rendered themselves masters of the country, and imparted to the inhabitants christianity and servitude.

Thus, being more intent on temporal than spiritual advantages, they were impatient to

⁴⁷ “ Accipe hunc ensem pugnaturus pro Deo, pro religione, & pro Domicilio Mariæ,” were the words repeated to the candidate in his admission to this sacred order. See Motray’s Travels. Lond. 1732. p. 46. And if we look into the history of their order, it will be found, no mandate could have been more agreeable to their wishes.

fall on the sinking state of Russia. To carry into execution this design, they demanded succours from the King of Denmark; and the Russians pretend, that the King of Sweden came in person with his powers; but it would be more agreeable to the substance of truth, had they affirmed, that this army was conducted by Birger, brother-in-law to the Swedish monarch. Arrived at the frontiers, he sent proposals to the prince of Novgorod and the citizens, to submit to his sway. The answer of Alexander to the deputies of the Swede, displayed his full determination to stem the rising torrent of their oppression. At the head of his faithful Novgorodians, who alone adhered to him on this day of honour, he advanced to meet them with an inferior force, but balancing this defect by superior courage.

The two armies encountered each other on the left bank of the famous Neva, near to the place where she pours her waters into the Gulph of Finland. Without repeating the uniform tale of devastation, it is sufficient to observe, that the dexterity and valour of the prince gained a decisive victory⁴³, while his
grateful

⁴³ Though the partiality of Puffendorf will not suffer him to speak of this victory, yet he does not dissemble the terror which the Russians inspired to the Swedes; and we learn from the same source, that Birger Jerl, who afterwards

grateful countrymen honoured him with the appellation of Nevski, in commemoration of this glorious action. But the claims of Alexander to the 'public gratitude were soon set aside by his arrogance. And if this local oppression had been healed by his sword, he invalidated all pretensions to the title of the Benefactor of his country, by his open invasion of its liberties. By which means the harmony between love and obedience was no longer maintained, and the cold dislike of the people was at last succeeded by the most marked disgust. Unable to bear any longer their hatred, he quitted the city, and established his residence near his father at Vladimir.

But soon after his departure, an event occurred which afforded him an opportunity of convincing the citizens of Novgorod that he had the magnanimity of mind to prefer the glory of again delivering the republic, to the indulgence of his revenge. The grandson of one Yaorassaf Vladimirovitz, who obeyed the dictates of a wild ambition, conceived that he was entitled to the same exercise of power which his grandfather had maintained in the republic of Novgorod ; and, to support

achieved the conquest of Finland, erected a strong fortress, in that country to stop their incursions. *Hist. de l'Europe*, tom. III. p. 87, 88. *Amst.* 1710.

his

his pretensions, summoned to his aid the vindictive Germans.

By them he scattered desolation throughout ^{1241,} the kingdom of Novgorod, seized on Pleskof by private treachery, and infused such a terror into the bravest of the Novgorodians, that they were obliged to solicit the return of the injured Alexander. Their petitions, and the order of his father, brought the valiant prince again to defend their cause, and fortune once more enlisted herself under his banners. The Germans were vanquished, the town which they had just built to become the key to the republic, razed to the ground, and Pleskof retaken, and placed under the protection of Novgorod. The clemency of the victor was extended only to the Germans, while the sentence of death awaited all the Tschudes who fell into his hands. It is true, that the character of these ancient inhabitants of Livonia was tarnished by the two hateful crimes of treachery and persecution towards Novgorod; but their want of virtue is but a poor justification for his cruelty.

The rapacious knights of Livonia once ^{1242.} more unfurled their consecrated banners, confident of victory, from the advantages of number; but they only took the field to enlarge the warlike renown of Alexander. The restitution of the whole country which they had
had

had usurped in their abuse of the Christian religion, was the result of this important victory, while the Lithuanians, who first sought to reap a fruitful harvest in the disorders of his country, did not escape the punishment of their injustice.

During these ineffectual enterprises against Novgorod, the principality of Vladimir began to enjoy the advantages of peace; but Batou soon taught them how vain it was to expect its continuance. After an absence of three years, in which time the irresistible Tatar had made destructive incursions into Poland, and as far as the borders of Germany; destroyed the cities of Cracow and Lublin; visited the shores of the Baltic; and in the memorable and bloody battle of Leignitz, overcame the Dukes of Silesia, the Polish Palatines, and the great master of the Teutonic order, and filled nine sacks with the ears of the slaughtered Christians⁴⁹; he then summoned Yaroslav to the horde to do homage as his vassal. The timid monarch, accompanied by his son Constantine, set off with speed to obey his commands, as he well knew, that the least

⁴⁹ “Tantus autem eo prælio intersectorum Christianorum numerus fuit, ut singulis singulæ auriculæ à Tartaris præcisæ, novem ingentes saccos exp'lerent.” Cromer, lib. vii. p. 215. De Rebus Polonorum. Neugebauer Solomon, in his *Historia Rerum Polonicarum*, has likewise drawn a very full and impressive picture of the battle of Leignitz. Franc. 1611, in fol. lib. iii. p. 141, 142.

delay to this insulting mandate, would subscribe his own sentence of death.

The Khan of Kaptchak, satisfied with his submission, received him with the honours due to his rank, apparently recognized his sovereignty over Russia, and content with his proffered gifts, dismissed this pageant of royalty to his estates, without exacting any other tribute; while his son Constantine pursued his way by the orders of Batou, to perform a similar homage at the great horde of the Mongols. 1243.

But after the death of Batou, who finished his victorious career in his magnificent palace of Serai, his brother, Bourgai, or Biraki, having obtained from the great khan the investiture of Dashtè Kaptchak, dispatched officers into Russia to number Suzdal, Mourom, and Riazan, and the other principalities of the empire, in order to impose a general tribute on the inhabitants, for the permission of breathing their native air. A principal officer, with the title of *Baskak*, was placed in the different principalities to gather the taxes, to watch over the interests of the conqueror, and to awe the disaffected. 1258.

After this memorable impost, which has so deeply affected the general liberty and independence of Russia, the grand princes on the death of their fathers, acknowledged, on their bended

bended knees, that all titles to their fiefs flowed from the khan of the great, or *golden horde*³⁰, as the only fountain of honour; nor could their confessions be called figurative or fallacious, for the frown of these despots was the harbinger of death, and their smiles the sunshine of fortune.

We have now followed, in regular succession, the actions of these scourges of mankind, to the period when they completely affixed the stamp of slavery on the neck of Russia³¹. But we shall spare the reader the perusal of those uniform acts of rapine, cruelty, and caprice, which marked their long dominion, and pass on to the more interesting

³⁰ It received this appellation from the superior magnificence of the Khan's tent, or Kibitika. But we read in the travels of Carpin and Rubruquis, that it was so denominated, because the Khan of China made a present to Zingis Khan of a rich tent, entirely covered with gold. The Russians, however, gave the name of the golden horde, not only to the court of the Khan, but also to his whole territory along the Volga. See a note of Mr. Tooke, in his second volume of the History of Russia, vol. ii. p. 251.

³¹ In the following sentence, the reader may discern the depth of Russian servitude, and the height of Tatar despotism: "Legatisque Tatarorum urbem, intransibis Duces Moscovitici lac equinum & avenam, pedites ferre obviam, titulum Chami flexis auscultare genibus, si quid lactis in jubam equi, ex phiala deflueret, *id lambendo abstergere*," &c. De Rebus Moscoviticis, lib. i p. 55.—See also Cromer, lib. xxix. p. 647.

relation of the downfall of their power, which may justly be said to have been effected by a single leader, who infused into the torpid bodies of his countrymen the spirit of courage and revenge.

REVOLUTION THE FOURTH.

The happy Consequences of the first systematic Attempt of Russia to deliver herself from the Tyranny of the Tatars in the Reign of Ivan III. Vassiliévitz.

1462. **T**HE hero who arose to revive the sinking name of Russia, and to establish his authority over the circumjacent tribes, was Ivan Vassiliévitz. But in tracing the rise and progress of his success, it may not be improper to give a rapid description of the internal condition of Russia, before he aspired to subvert the power of the tremendous khans.

When this renowned prince ascended the dependent throne of Russia, he cast a reflecting view on the surface of affairs, and beheld the aspect of actual circumstances uncommonly propitious to his great and arduous project. From a combination of ordinary

¹ Thuanus, in his great work *Historia sui Temporis*, Par. 1604, Lib. xv. p. 550, and Milton, in his brief *History of Moscovia*, and many other writers, very improperly ascribe the breaking of the Tatar chain to the spirited persuasions of his wife Sophia, daughter of the Greek Emperor Palæologus. See his *Historical, Political, and Miscellaneous Works*, Lond. 1663, p. 828.

and

and casual events, the power of the grand prince, at this memorable period, was enlarged beyond the narrow circle of his predecessors. The greater part of those appanages, which had been successively dispoliated from their sway, had now reverted to their original generation. Many families of the feudatory princes were extinct, others saw their hereditary rights plucked from their grasp by the hand of wanton oppression, whilst the rest lost or were curtailed of their political consequence in the constant hostility of opposition.

Thus progressively mouldered away the unweildy and ill-according pillars of the feudal constitution. To erect therefore on their ruins, a flourishing state, required the undivided attention of a man, gifted alike with originality of thought and intrepidity of action; and such an authoritative, overbearing, discerning, and undaunted genius, appeared in Ivan Vassiliévitz².

From nature we inherit that curiosity which is seen, in all ages, to operate so powerfully on the human mind, and which ever leads us to investigate the infancy, education, and character of men, whose names have been celebrated for the great events and be-

² "Il eut," says the forcible Lacombe, "les qualités qui font les conquérans, un génie actif, une ame intrepide, un corps indefatigable." *Histoire de Russie*, p. 32.

neficial changes produced by their achievements. The confusion of the times has cast but a dim light upon the two first in the history of Ivan, whilst his actions form the truest and noblest commentary on his character. At the age of three-and-twenty, when the fruit of manhood begins to ripen into the most valuable perfection, this wise and spirited prince first drew the outlines of that grand design which was to stop the desolating incursions of the surrounding hordes, and to immortalize his name in the annals of his country.

1465. ³ The kingdom of Kazan first attracted his warlike notice, from motives of policy and filial tenderness; bordering upon Eastern Russia, and master of the mighty Volga, with impunity this formidable country could pour her impetuous Tatars into the very heart of his empire, whenever she chose to obey the calls of caprice or revenge. While the private feelings of the son prompted him to wash off the disgrace and to punish the treatment of his parent, whom the fickleness of fortune had conducted to this devoted territory, in the humiliating state of a prisoner; his safety, his interest, his vengeance,

³ We are still solely indebted to the elaborate researches of Levesque and Le Clerc, who hold the torch of truth to guide us in our dark and perilous way.

his glory, all stimulated him therefore to annihilate the strength of Kazan.

It is a trite though just remark, that injuries tend to increase our exertions. The efficacy of this principle seems to have been felt by the politic Ivan, when he entrusted the command of his forces to the Tatar prince Kaffim *. This prince, with his brother Yakûb, had fled to the Russian court, when his eldest brother Mamotiack had mounted the throne of Kazan', stained with the blood of his father. It was natural for Ivan to think that his warmth of resentment made him the fittest person to promote his designs of overthrowing Ibrahim, the son of Mamotiack, and the heir of his power, though not of his crimes.

But this expedition, which had been formed 1468. on such well grounded expectations of success, was productive only of misery and distress. Their horses perished by the intense severity of the weather, and the Russian soldiers were reduced to such a state of want, that their efforts were unavailing to abstain from meat in Lent. Nevertheless, the extreme rigour of the winter did not prevent another army

* Levesque, tom. ii. p. 318, 319, 320, 321. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 229, 230.

† Even in that accurate and impartial historian Herbeſtein, can be observed a confusion and obscurity in dates, names, and persons, when he records the events of these times.

from prosecuting with vigour and success, in the country of the Tcheremisses, a people subject to the power of Kazan, the share of the bloody work that had been allotted to them. In the cold bleak month of January, they fearlessly plunged through the thickest recesses of those forests, whose intricate paths had never before been accessible to the most adventurous footsteps. But their cruelty tarnished the fame of this daring enterprize; they butchered, they doomed to the flames, men, women, and children; they destroyed their cabins, cattle, and forests. They laboured to efface every mark which might denote the existence of the former inhabitants.

1470. This war branched out into two campaigns. In the last, to animate the soldiers, Ivan bestowed the chief command of the armies on his brothers, Andrew and Boris. A numerous cavalry followed their march, while the infantry proceeded down the Volga in their slender barks. When all were assembled, they formed the important siege of Kazan. The Tatars first drew their swords with the resolution to conquer or to die. In a furious sally, they displayed their wonted acts of skill and courage. But after maintaining a most obstinate and bloody conflict under the walls, they were at last repulsed by the patient firmness of the Russians. The city

city was then invested on all parts. The besieged, cut off from the supply of water by the vigilance of the foe, and pressed by an accumulation of wants, could no longer avert the fate of Kazan. Ibrahim was compelled to supplicate for peace; and, in the anguish of his heart, acknowledged himself the vassal and tributary of the great prince. He had the happiness of not long surviving his fallen state. Thus fell the proud strength of Kazan. Its reduction is memorable, as it opened the first prospect to Tatar emancipation.

A fresh incident presented itself, which was seized with eager avidity by Ivan, to enlarge the sphere of his dignity and influence. The archbishop of Novgorod died in the year fourteen hundred and seventy. The citizens, according to an established custom, proceeded to decide by lots the election of his successor, and fortune favoured the hopes of the Monk Theophilus. Ivan was solicited to confirm their choice, and to permit the new prelate to receive at Moscow the consecration of the Metropolitan. The prince received their embassy in the most favourable manner, and assured the deputies, that he should ever feel a pleasure in shewing acts of kindness to the republic, which he regarded as his patrimony.

⁶ Levesque, tom. ii. p. 322, 323, 324. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 231, 232.

Perhaps the overstraining temper of suspicion would insinuate, that this word patrimony did but ill assimilate with the hereditary right of protection, which the republic so freely bestowed upon him, and of which she could divest him without incurring the imputation of rebellion. But that expression to the deputies was unfortunately stretched beyond the measure of its real import, by those factious spirits who sighed in the inactivity of peace, and longed to renew their former scenes of civil bloodshed. For the irreparable misfortune of the republic, it reckoned among her inhabitants, a woman of the name of Marpha, of boundless ambition, of uncommon capacity, and skilled in the difficult art of forming a party, and ruling over it with uncontrolled authority. She was the widow of a Pofadnik, or Governor, named Isaac Boretzkoi, who had greatly distinguished himself in the exercise of his functions. The fruits of their marriage were several sons, in all of whom were strongly portrayed the maternal features of craft and enterprize. To give a stability and importance to her party, this aspiring female attached to her interests a monk named Pimin, who, under the garb of immaculate piety, contrived to sow the seeds of discord among the people.

The

The passion of love mingled itself in this intrigue of ambition ; Marpha was enamoured with a Lithuanian nobleman, and, to enhance the value of her affection, she purposed to deliver the republic into the hands of the King of Poland, and to reign with this new object of her attachment in the name of the prince ; while self-interest enticed the monk to overleap the bounds of caution : the archbishop of Novgorod, and the establishment of the Latin church, to which he was united, were the proposed rewards of his exertions.

Thus, while the friendly disposition of the grand prince had instilled the principles of gratitude in the minds of the more prudent citizens, the spirit of discord went forth by the seditious harangues of Marpha, her sons, and partizans. They proclaimed the shame of the republic, in submitting herself to Ivan ; they boldly declared, that the state had too long tolerated the authoritative acts of the sovereigns of Moscow ; that Novgorod was free ; and that, to maintain her freedom, she ought to look around for the aid of some power capable of preventing the mischief arising from their ambition. This inflammatory discourse terminated in the assertion, that it was far better to throw themselves into the arms of Cassimir king of Poland, than

to acknowledge the dominion of the Russian prince.

The chiefs of the rebellion⁷ easily found men, who could not withstand the allurements of gold. When the price of their guilt was settled, they rushed in a body to the market-place, sounded the great bell of the assembly, which was revered as the pledge of liberty and the palladium of the city, and cried out tumultuously, that they should submit themselves to the king of Poland. Those citizens who perceived the fatal tendency of their designs, raised their voices in favour of Ivan, but a shower of stones from the adverse party, presently silenced their vociferations.

Such outrages, however, did not weaken the courage of the patriotic citizens; all who were venerable by their age, wisdom, and virtue, accompanied by the officers of the state, appeared in public, to exhort the factions to the return of their duty. With much dexterity and force of argument, they laboured to awaken the ancient horrors which the Russians had invariably conceived for the Latin church; the establishment of which they foresaw would be the end of their mutinous perseverance. But no efforts, however prompt or judicious, could bend them to obedience. They dispatched ambassadors to the king of

⁷ Levesque, tom. ii. p. 325, 326.

Poland with rich presents, and with the offer of putting themselves under his power.

The grand prince, apprized of the events 1471. which disturbed the peace of Novgorod, declined all hostile declarations, before he had tried the influence of negotiation. But this mode of proceeding was productive of no beneficial consequence. The propositions of his ambassadors were rejected with contempt, as they rashly considered them to be the effects of weakness, fear, and irresolution.

When Ivan perceived that his pacific overtures were answered with the language of disrespect, he then determined that the sword of war should check their spreading dissensions. And to convince the conspirators, that his warlike intentions would not evaporate into idle menaces, he raised three armies, one of which was honoured by the royal presence, that entered the territories of this distracted republic on three different sides. It would have been impossible, perhaps, for Ivan to humble the power of Novgorod during the summer; but this year there fell little rain, and the constant heat dried up the marshes which served as ramparts to the Novgorodian state. The prince Kholmiskoi headed one part of Ivan's forces; and he merited the favour of his royal master, by carrying desolation to the south and west of the lake Ilmen.

To stop his triumphant progress, the cavalry of the Novgorodians, amounting to thirty thousand men, advanced against him. In the first battle, the success of Kholmiskoi intimidated their boldness; and in the second, in which the Novgorodians had left on the field of battle two thousand of their bravest soldiers; and in which two thousand more might have repeated, with a feeling certainty, the sentence of the immortal Homer, that the day which makes a man a slave, takes away one half of his manly virtue; the Russian prince stood on all sides victorious. Nor did the rage of Kholmiskoi subside until the havoc of war was felt on the borders of the Neva, and the frontiers of Sweden. Among the spoils of the conquerors, was found the copy of a treaty, by which the Novgorodians offered to surrender their dearest privileges to Cassimir. The eldest son of Marpha was taken prisoner, and received the just reward of his crimes, with several other principal conspirators. The rest were dispersed into different exiles^a.

It is not to be supposed, that Ivan, in extending the circle of his dominion, neglected the seizure of other acquisitions, which were of less slippery and perishable nature than the wreath of glory. Equally the votary of am-

^a L'evesque, tom. ii. p. 327. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 234.

bition and avarice, he procured from the timid and impotent Novgorodians, an unconditional acknowledgment of his rights, and then the tale of truth or calumny declares, that his coffers were enriched with three hundred cart loads of gold and silver⁹. Soon after his departure from the city, some of the Novgorodians once more openly aspired to freedom, under the shield of Poland, but even this protection could not save them from degradation and confinement.

To take vengeance at once of their rebellious proceedings, and to hinder them from forming a second time any combination injurious to his authority, he abolished their popular assemblies, removed to Moscow the *vetchevoi-kolokol*, or great bell, which summoned them to all matters of high import, whether of war or peace, liberty or commerce, civil or domestic tumult; abrogated the privileges of the city; conveyed fifty of the principal Novgorodian families, who were most conspicuous in the discontents, to other Russian towns; and afterwards recommended this system of

⁹ "Tantæ vero fuerit Novogardenſium opes, ut trecentos currus, auro & argento onuſtos, inde abduxiſſe dicatur." See Genealogia Magni Moſcoviæ ducis in Reſpub. Moſcov. p. 9. Neugebauer thus diſmiſſes the perfidy of Ivan, and the fall of Novgorod, with an indignant brevity: "Novgorodiam magnam, totius ſeptentrionis emporium, celeberrimam urbem, per fraudem cepit, et in ſervitutem redegit." See Moſcoviæ Commentarius, Ged. 1612, cap. i. p. 6.

trans-

transplantation, by distributing thousands of considerable Novgorodians into various parts of his empire, and replenishing the emptied city by a number of subjects, upon whose loyalty and faith he could place a perfect reliance¹⁰. Such cool and deliberate vengeance may palliate the loudest reproaches of the Novgorodians; and he became an object of horror and detestation to the neighbouring countries, when he imprisoned all the German merchants residing at Novgorod, to the number of nine-and-forty, and confiscated all the merchandize belonging to the Hanseatic league, amounting to immense value for these times. By such proceedings, to justify which, reasons perhaps might be easily found in the code of a victor, the liberties and commerce of Novgorod¹¹ received so deep a stab, as to exhibit ever afterwards the appearance of a gradual decline.

From the measures of harsh policy, we now rise to the glorious view of those events which enabled the long oppressed Russians to breathe once again the invigorating air of in-

¹⁰ Tooke, vol. i. p. 283, 284.

¹¹ Novgorod then formed one of the four great *contorii*, or comptoirs, which the amazing commerce of the Hanseatic League had established in different parts of Europe; but of which he could no longer boast of keeping, on the impolitic tyranny of Ivan. See Anderson's valuable work, an Historical and Chronological Deduction of the Origin of Commerce, vol. i. p. 494. vol. ii. p. 94.

dependence.

dependence. In the year which followed Ivan's first expedition to Novgorod, Akhmet Khan¹², of the golden horde, the scourge and terror of his people, dispatched his officers to Ivan with a *basma*, or an order of the great seal to demand from him the payment of that tribute which had long ceased to gall the pride of his degenerate ancestors.

The dauntless Ivan, ambitious to figure in the field of glory, snatched the *basma*, tore this badge of servitude into pieces, and then sullied this bold action, by a precipitate order for the execution of the ambassadors. Boldly resolving to commit his life and empire to the chance of war, he did not meanly attempt to conceal this crime, but reserved one of the deputies to inform his master of his defiance. This deed of Ivan's justly stains his memory with the name of tyrant, according to the judgment of a civilized age, but which assumed with the Russians of these times the more honourable appellation of intrepid firmness.

On the following year, 1472, the Khan, impatient to revenge the blood of his ambassadors by the mighty sacrifice of Russia, with

¹² Levesque, tom. ii. p. 339, 340, 341, 342, 343. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 242, 243.

impunity

impunity exposed its frontiers to all the ravages of war¹³. But when his troops had reached the banks of the Oka, and had scarcely disembarked on its opposite shore, he beheld with astonishment and dismay, his active opponent ready to receive him, supported by numbers and discipline. At this formidable and unexpected fight he repassed the river, and to consult his safety by flight. A great
 1480. number of the Tatars became victims of this retreat, and those whom he reconducted to the Horde, were soon afterwards swept away by that terrible and fatal enemy to mankind, the plague¹⁴.

The calamities which oppressed his subjects, imposed on the disappointed monarch the

¹³ All foreign historians, down from the copious Herberstein to the concise Lacombe, have touched but slightly on this interesting period of Russia.

¹⁴ If nastiness in our persons and dwellings be a great source of *infection*, (see Mead's celebrated discourse on the plague, Lond. 1744, ninth edition, p. 130.) we cannot be surprised that this king of diseases should have frequently visited the Tatars, the most uncleanly people perhaps on the face of the globe. But a skilful and ingenious physician of the present age, Dr. Moseley, would perhaps be inclined to ascribe its origin to the *atmosphere*, which he conceives to be the *universal propagator of pestilence*. See, in his curious and interesting Treatise on Sugar, a dissertation on the Plague, the characteristics of which are originality of thought, acuteness of reasoning, and extent of erudition; second edition, p. 217.

long cessation of three years from any new devastation. But that interval was employed in the most strenuous preparations for the renewal of bloodshed. Fixed on chastising the audacious insult offered to his authority, he assembled all his forces, flattering himself that every opposition would sink beneath the gigantic strength of the whole Tatar horde. The warlike prince of Russia, apprised of the march of the khan, soon lined with troops the banks of the Oka. Akhmet, instructed of the judicious dispositions of his rival, altered his route, and hastened to the frontiers of Lithuania, in order to unite himself to those forces he expected from Cassimir, in support of this great and approaching contest. But Ivan, on the first intelligence of these new arrangements of the Tatar, overtook him on the banks of the Ougra, and frustrated his hopes of passing the river. Each day fresh actions took place, which were fought with doubtful success. But the moment Ivan received the joyful news that the horde was unprotected, the prospect of gaining an easy victory determined him to send an army to this storehouse of riches. The Russians on their arrival found only an unarmed multitude of old men, women, and children; when all these had been involved in the same destruction, when all their habitations were committed

committed to the ravages of fire, the love of plunder then succeeded, which was gratified with such a variety of riches, as perhaps surpassed their warmest expectations.

The thoughtless Akhmet¹³, reposing in the lap of indolence on the banks of the Ougra, soon learnt that his horde had been delivered up to the vengeance of his rapacious foe. These tidings generated a series of woes. In his haste to pursue the Russians, he mistook their route. While, in the intermediate time, the Tatars of Nougay entered the horde, carried off the women of the great khan, destroyed the relics of every thing which had been left by the Russians, and, continuing their march, crossed the Volga, fell on Akhmet, and boldly hazarded a general engagement. After a most obstinate conflict, the event of the day covered the soldiers of the great khan with everlasting disgrace; while he himself was reported to have fallen a victim to fraternal treachery. Thus was annihilated the golden horde, founded by the famous Batou about the middle of the thirteenth century, which had poured forth myriads of men, whose rapid

¹³ After the Tatars of Kaptchak had ceased to obey the voice of one khan, there issued from this immense plain several independent hordes, who abridged each other's life and power in frequent, long, and bloody contests.

conquests,

conquests, to use the words of an elegant and profound historian ¹⁶, may be compared with the primitive convulsions of nature, which have agitated and altered the surface of the globe.

But while Ivan, seconded by the concurrence of fortunate circumstances, each day enhanced the lustre of his diadem, his victories and his future schemes of ambition were on the point of being closed, by the treachery of a neighbouring foe ¹⁷. Attracted by his fame, some Lithuanian noblemen were anxious to be received into his service. Cassimir, king of Poland, sought to convert this desertion of his subjects into the means of revenge against a prince, whose name had impressed him with hatred and terror. It was proposed 1482. to the Prince Loukomski, who had unreservedly engaged in the infamous plans of his sovereign, that he should repair to the court of Moscow, use all address to gain the good opinion of Ivan, and, in the confidence of a friendly interview, administer poison to the unsuspecting prince. The plot wore at first the most favourable aspect of success. Loukomski was admitted without mistrust to the friendship of Ivan, but while each minute

¹⁶ Gibbon, vol. xi. p. 401.

¹⁷ Levesque, tom. ii. p. 344. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 245.

seemed

seemed to shorten the narrow span of his life and empire, the villainous intentions of the Lithuanian were unexpectedly discovered. We are ignorant in what manner this diabolical plan was defeated ; and which exposed him to the disgrace and torture of being burnt alive in a cage of iron.

The standard of war was erected by this unjustifiable attempt, and the prudence, valour, and skill of Ivan, proved fatal to the arms of Poland. But while he was reaping well-earned trophies in this war, which lasted ten years ; the army of Novgorod took their vengeance on the Knights of the Sword for insulting Pleskof, and burning its suburbs, when Ivan was engaged in his Tataric war. These troops also reunited to Russia several towns of importance, which had been wrested at different epochs from her dominion.

An opportunity now presented itself to Ivan of adding a most valuable jewel to his crown. The important principality of Tver¹⁸ belonged to Mikhail son of Boris, whose daughter had been espoused by Ivan ; Mikhail dared to appear in open rebellion of his brother-in-law ; and his ill-timed request to Cassimir for succours, doubtless served

¹⁸ Levesque, tom. ii. p. 345 ; and Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 246.

more to exasperate than to allay the indignation of the Russian prince. But Ivan, so far from being alarmed, secretly rejoiced in the revolt of this audacious vassal, as it furnished him with the specious pretext of holding what he should capture by the strong arm of power.

Such an adversary, however, he deemed totally unworthy of his presence. An army, therefore, under the command of a Voyevode, was dispatched to awe him into respect and obedience. Mikhail, however, fought with a courage roused by despair, and for a long time withstood the veteran troops, the conquerors of the Tatars. Reduced, at last, to the utmost state of distress, he was compelled to sue for peace, which was refused him with all the insolence of projected oppression. 1485.

The firmness and dexterity which Mikhail had displayed in the different engagements, determined Ivan no longer to remain an inactive spectator of his rising glory, but to crush at once, by his own presence, all his hopes of deliverance. The boldest of the chieftains of Tver trembled for their safety, when they heard of his approach, and, grown insensible by terror to their former fame, they shamefully deserted to Ivan, and left their wretched monarch to seek safety by flight into Lithuania. Thus, by his intrepidity, his
K vigilance, 1486.

vigilance, and his address, with the sole exception of Severia, which still acknowledged the authority of its peculiar sovereign, Ivan embraced in his mighty grasp the collective force of the whole Russian empire¹⁹.

This uninterrupted series of prosperity tended more than ever to increase his pride and ambition; he could therefore be expected to hear with indifference of the kingdom of Kazan rising with fresh vigour from her late serious wound. Ali²⁰ Khan, eldest son of the unfortunate Ibrahim, was now seated on the throne of Kazan. His brothers, Mahmet Amin and Abdel Atif, had repaired to the Russian court, where they had received considerable appanages. We cannot assign any decent apology for the unnatural hatred of the princes, which urged them at all times to counsel Ivan to oppress their brother and countrymen with the desolating calamities of war; an advice, which was heard with attention, as it perfectly suited with his ambitious designs.

¹⁹ In one sentence Herbestein includes the victories of Ivan, which cost him the labour of so many years; — “ Cui postea omnes alii principes, magnitudine rerum à se gestarum commoti, seu timore percussi, serviebant.” P. 7. *Rerum Moscov. Comm.*

²⁰ Levesque, tom. ii. p. 346, 347. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 247.

- A great army now proceeded to the territories of Kazan. The dauntless Ali Khan aspired to revenge the fatal defeat of his father on the banks of the Sviaga. In a battle long, various, and bloody, the Tatars were completely defeated, and their khan taken prisoner. The few that escaped the keen edge of the Russian sword, made a disorderly retreat into the city, which was soon obliged to submit to Ivan. "The tremendous discovery of the Latins" had now reached the Russians, and to those implements of destruction, the cannon and the musquet²¹, which Ivan had learned to use with tolerable skill in battle, (an advantage of which the Tatars were then utterly destitute²²), may

²¹ If the Chinese have been acquainted with the use of gunpowder above 1600 years, as the French missionary Per-Gaubil affirms; — "Il est certain que les Chinois ont l'usage de la poudre depuis plus de 1600 ans;" *Histoire de Gentchiscan & de toute la Dynastie des Mongous ses Successeurs, Conquérans de la Chine*, Par. 1739. p. 72;—it is rather singular, that some accident should not have discovered it to the Tatars, in their numerous wars with this celebrated empire.

²² Aristotle of Bologna first communicated to Ivan the decisive effects of artillery. His talents were employed in the threefold capacity of architect, mint master, and founder. See *Essai sur la Bibliothèque & le Cabinet de Curiosités & d' Histoire Naturelle de l' Academie des Sciences de St. Petersbourg*, par Jean Bachmeiller, p. 28.

perhaps be ascribed their success in this engagement.

Thus the arduous task of protecting his people from the formidable invasions of the sovereigns of Kazan, was completely achieved by the unrelaxing energy of Ivan; and the khan, his wife, and mother, and two of his brothers, who were as exemplary for their steady attachment to his person, as Mahmet Amin and Abdel Atif for their disloyalty, were all brought to Moscow, as the chief ornaments of this memorable triumph. The khan and his disconsolate wife were soon afterwards removed to Vologda, and his mother and brothers to Bielozero, for their stubborn refusal to be initiated into the sacred rites of baptism. They all terminated their existence in these retreats of poverty and dependence, except the widow of Ali, and the youngest brother of this prince, who was afterwards baptised, and became his son-in-law.

The chiefs of the Russian army had left a Voyevode to command at Kazan, until they should be acquainted with the orders of the sovereign. Ivan, after pondering with a deliberate caution on the most suitable character to reign over the turbulent Kazanites, at last determined that Mahmet Amin, the brother of Ali, should mount the vacant throne, firmly

firmly persuaded, that his gratitude would revere him as his benefactor, and obey him as his sovereign. But this most obsequious of slaves became oppressive to his government, and his gift, in the end, created only violent ingratitude.

The love of his subjects was soon alienated 1488. from the new sovereign, by his complicated vices. The rich he deprived of their fortunes, fathers of their daughters, husbands of their wives, and those who were steeped in poverty, trembled each moment for the security of their lives. A government, which daily exhibited such glaring and wanton acts of cruelty and persecution, could not be long tolerated by the most passive nation in the world.

" The people expelled the tyrant, called in a foreign prince named Manouk, and were equally unhappy in their election. Sensible that they had acted wrong, by the disposal of the throne without the sanction of the grand prince, they dispatched an ambassador to implore his pardon, and to solicit a more lawful successor.

The nomination of Ivan was then propi- 1497. tious to the interests of Abdel Atif, but his ingratitude, after a reign of five years, at last

²³ *Levetfque*, tom. ii. p. 348. *Le Clerc*, tom. ii. p. 248.

drove him from his government. Seized in his palace by the officers of Ivan, and conducted to Moscow, he was there stripped of his honours, and then permitted to linger through the remainder of his days in exile and oblivion. But more singular was his third and last appointment. By his command, 1502. the odious Mahmet Amin, under whom the people had so lately and so laudably disclaimed the yoke of subordination, again held the sceptre of his ancestors; and, still more to heighten the impolitic tendency of this act, he suffered him to embrace the widow of Ali as his wife, and then to accompany him to Kazan.

* This artful princess, with all the ready eloquence which the fierce passion of hatred inspires, contrived to undermine the loyalty of her husband, by representing to him the ignominy of obedience, when he possessed the title of sovereign. When she perceived her words sink deep into the heart of the wavering Mahmet Amin, she cried out with all the rant of enthusiasm, that should he still bow before the iron sceptre of Ivan, he would reflect an irreparable disgrace on the Mussulmen, who were destined by Heaven to give laws to the Christians.

* Levesque, tom. ii. p. 349, 350, 351. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 249, 250.

The seeds of loyalty had not taken sufficient root in the breast of the delegated Tatar, to resist these insinuations of his wife. The first circumstance that proclaimed his open rebellion was his giving orders for the assassination of all the Russian merchants that could be found in his kingdom. Nor were their wives and children suffered to escape his barbarity. And to render this sacrifice of human blood more summary and hideous, he fixed on the twenty-fourth of June, the day on which the merchants from all parts of Russia came to display their valuable goods at the celebrated fair of Kazan. It is needless to add, that the assassins did not overlook the spoils of their victims. 1504.

After so daring an insult on the authority of Ivan, Mahmet Amin perceived, that he could only hope for safety, by introducing fresh scenes of slaughter; he therefore collected the whole force of his kingdom, procured from the ferocious Nogais a succour of twenty thousand men, and interrupted the short season of Russian tranquillity, by rushing down like a torrent on its southern provinces. Encouraged by his first successes, he marched against Nigni-Novgorod, possessed their suburbs, and carried on the assault for thirty days; the defence of which city was intrusted to a Voyevode

called Khabar-Simski. This commander could reckon but a handful of men; yet his example taught them to meet undismayed every kind of danger. Under his guard however were a considerable number of prisoners of war, chiefly composed of Lithuanian arquebusiers. Led by a fearless policy to think that their sentiments of revenge would be absorbed in the common danger, he struck off their chains, excited their courage by the hope of reward, equipped them with arms, and then made with them a most desperate sally. The brother-in-law to Mahmet Amin, a Nogian prince, was among the first to feel the destructive effects of their united exertions. Irritated at his loss, the troops of his nation adopted a singular kind of revenge. On a sudden they suspended their rage against the Russians, and turned their arms against those whom they had come to support; and the walls of Nigni-Novgorod exhibited the curious and afflicting spectacle of two people of the same faith, renouncing their professions of alliance, and encountering each other with such obstinate rage, that numbers fell before they could be separated by Mahmet Amin.

When the enraged Ivan received the intelligence of the perfidy of Mahmet, the massacre of the Russians, and the recent enterprizes of the Tatars, he resolved his triumph should be
of

of a short duration. An immense army of an hundred thousand men²⁵ marched against the rebel, to put this decree into execution. But the Voyevodes, distrusting each other, lost, by their cowardice or procrastinations, the opportunity of striking the decisive blow. Fortunately, Mahmet Amin, believing himself not strong enough to resist the Russian army, raised the siege, and retired to his capital. Soon afterwards the hand of death put an end to the meditated vengeance of Ivan, in the forty-third year of his reign, and in the sixty-sixth of his age.

The state of a people may justly be considered as forming the nicest touchstone of the real merits of a sovereign. Under Ivan Vassiliévitz we behold a nation respectable in the eyes of foreign powers²⁶, and applying their

²⁵ The modern reader, on recollecting the many and great difficulties attendant on the supply of an army of thirty or forty thousand men, may be inclined to think the amount of the Russian army swelled by the carelessness or incorrect information of the historian. But as he advances, he will be more familiarized to these immense numbers; and those who are conversant with Russian history, well know, that the fact is supported by such undeniable evidence, as not to be considered as an absurd exaggeration.

²⁶ After Russia had struck out a way which led to the restoration of her national independence, she attracted the regards of Europe; and Moscow, for the first time saw the ambassadors of the Emperor of Germany, the Pope, the King of Poland, the Republic of Venice, and the King of Denmark.

their attention to those measures which might obtain subordination. We behold them following with equal wisdom and success every path which could conduce to their internal and external prosperity and renown, who before had languished under the most scandalous tyranny, productive among all classes of a spirit of disconnection, of weakness, of lassitude, of distress, and of decay. We are therefore warranted in concluding, that the monarch who could produce such a remarkable and happy revolution in the foreign and domestic affairs of his country, must be endowed with a political wisdom and enterprising ambition, capable of forming and accomplishing plans, the benefit of which, should be no less immediate than permanent to his subjects.

Denmark. With all these foreign powers, Ivan signed treaties of alliance and friendship. See L^evesque, tom. ii. p. 364. and Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 253.

REVOLUTION THE FIFTH.

*The Progress of Russian Emancipation in the Reign of
Vassili IV. Ivanovitz.*

THE throne of the deceased Ivan was as- 1505.
cended by his son Vassili without opposition.
The rights of the young Demetrius², the
grandson of Ivan, were forgotten, and the
unfortunate prince died in captivity. In
taking possession of a government which
had been cast into a new mould of strength
and beauty, by his father, Vassili wished
to preserve it entire and unbroken, by the
solid advantages of peace; he therefore con-
cluded treaties with Poland, and with Mil-
dei Guerei, khan of Crim: but the rupture
with Mahmet Amin of Kazan was too
violent to be healed by any pacific correc-
tives.

Sensible of the irreconcilable hatred of this 1508.
powerful foe, and eager to see Kazan again
subject to the Russian empire, he made the

¹ Levesque, tom. ii. p. 367, 368, 369. Le Clerc, tom. ii.
p. 256, 257.

² The reader may find in Rerum Moscov. Comment. p. 7.
a full account of the untimely fate of this young prince.

most

1598. most formidable preparations to carry that wish into execution. An hundred thousand men marched under the command of his brother Demetrius against Kazan. This expedition was observable for the imprudence and successive defeats of the two rival armies. The Russians, who did not apprehend an attack, were surprised by the well-timed activity of Mahmet Amin, and compelled, after enduring a considerable loss, to turn their backs with shame and confusion. The Tatars, in the insolence of this imperfect conquest, scorned every suggestion of seasonable precaution, came out from the city with their wives and children, pitched their tents in the plain, and after the custom of their country, indulged themselves in drunkenness for a victory, the fruits of which they considered so substantial.

The Russians, who soon arose from their partial defeat with fresh vigour, on the moment they were apprized of their celebration of this victory, or of a festival, resolved to retrieve their disgrace in the blood of their foes. With rapid, though cautious steps, they made their approach, until they could distinctly perceive the Tatars scattered along the ground in thoughtless security. On a sudden they were aroused from their slumbers by the shouts

shouts and the swords of their enemies. Astonishment produced flight and dismay, and those who were not cut in pieces, oppressed by a vigorous pursuit, and their own fears, crowded into the city with such precipitate haste, as to be stifled to death on entering the gates.

If the Russians had been anxious to improve this signal advantage, they should have entered the defenceless gates with the terrified Tatars; or if they had blockaded the city only for a few days, a cheap and bloodless victory must have been the inevitable consequence; but instead of pursuing either of these obvious plans, they were more impatient to indulge their avarice and hunger in the abandoned camp of the Tatars.

The Kazanites, exasperated at their late and unexpected disaster, were eager to inflict the most severe vengeance on its authors; and the injudicious conduct of the Russians enabled them to begin and to complete this work of dreadful retaliation. From a lofty tower, the vigilant khan espied them immersed in wine and sleep; with all imaginable speed, fifty thousand assembled in arms, flushed with the well-grounded confidence of an easy, though not a merciless conquest, and quickly stained their swords with the blood
of

of the indolent and confused Russians. Seven thousand men out of that mighty host, which like a whirlwind might have borne down all opposition, had it husbanded its late success with the smallest skill and prudence, alone escaped from this *acedelma*¹, this field of blood, to relate the fatal carelessness of their countrymen, which afforded the Tatars a fair opportunity of assuming again a superiority over Russia, dangerous in the utmost degree to her liberty and independence.

But happily for her internal security, the victorious Mahmet Amin, soon after this success, was attacked by an incurable distemper. Conscious of his crimes, he conceived that his illness was given him by Heaven as a punishment for his ingratitude to Vassili. Impressed every day with this distracting thought, as a mark of his unfeigned contrition, he dispatched an embassy to Vassili, with the valuable present of two or three hundred of his best horses. The Russian prince, touched with the sincere repentance of a dying

¹ "Nos combats en Europe," says a celebrated writer, "paraissent des légères escarmouches, en comparaison de ses batailles qui ont ensanglanté quelquefois l'Asie." See *Œuvres de Voltaire*, tom. xviii. *Essai sur les Mœurs & l'Esprit des Nations*, p. 29. If the curiosity of the reader be not already damped by this uniform narrative of bloodshed, he will certainly feel the truth of this observation, before he comes to the final abolition of Russian slavery.

enemy, sent him words of friendship and condolence, and gifts of considerable value*.

The wretched Mahmet expired in the same year; his last hours tortured by the stings of a guilty conscience. His wife, the author of his perfidy, terminated her days by poison, fearful of meeting the just punishment of the grand prince.

A war was now commenced with Poland, 1514. which, though stopped for a time, by some hollow professions of amity, broke out again with redoubled violence, and lasted upwards of nine years, by the formidable ambition and restless treachery of Sigismond king of Poland. But fortune did not correspond with the wishes of this prince; his martial pride was humbled by the loss of Smolensk, and the poverty of his resources testified by the result of a fresh treaty of peace with the grand prince for five years.

This peace restored new vigour to the 1523. arm of Vassili, who had now only to punish the rebellious sons of Kazan. When the faithless Mahmet had expired, the grand prince appointed for his successor, a Tatar named Sheikh Ali, khan of Kassimof, whose uniform attachment to him had merited

* Levesque, tom. ii. p. 370. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 258.

† Levesque, tom. ii. p. 382, 383, 384. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 265.

his esteem and confidence. While a Russian Voyerode, of the name of Karpof, attended this prince to his new government, in the capacity of a general or spy.

Sheikh Ali reigned three years over his new subjects, without procuring their love or respect. His outward appearance was not indeed well calculated to command the respect and admiration of a warlike race of men; according to the tradition of the times, his figure exhibited the most uncouth proportion and disgusting ugliness; his ears were long and hanging, his belly of singular protuberance, his legs short and swelled; nor was his mind, to compensate for these external defects, endowed with any of the qualifications of a hero. Besides these personal disadvantages, the Tatars soon perceived, that the dignity and independence of the monarch were lost in the odious and contemptible occupation of the spy; and their haughty spirits could ill brook the controul of a people from whom they had so long exacted and received every mark of submission. Impatient therefore of subordination, they endeavoured to place before the eye of this slave of Russia the glorious view of independence. But Sheikh Ali, who knew that the sure and easy road to the preservation of his dignity, was only to be found in prompt obedience to Vassili, was little inclined

elined to gratify their wishes ; and, at once, to express his loyalty to his Russian master, condemned to death the most conspicuous among these partizans of liberty.

This severity produced in fifteen hundred and twenty-one a general revolt. The Kazanites secretly solicited Mildi Guérei, khan of Crim, to entrust them with the person of his young son. The ambitious khan joyfully complied with their request, and Sapha Guérei was hailed by the acclamations of his new subjects, even before the Sheikh Ali dreamt that his expulsion was meditated.

The sense of past slavery gave an additional spur to the cruelty of the Tatars. The Christians, whose unhappy fate had led them to Kazan, were inhumanly slaughtered. The life of the Voyevode was respected, but his palace was plundered ; and the blood of about a thousand men of his train spilt. The same fate attended five thousand Tatars of Sheikh Ali : but as their late sovereign was ranked among the relatives of the khan, that tie alone proved his deliverance ; and both he, and the Voyevode, by the command of Sapha Guérei, were escorted as far as might be deemed necessary for their personal security.

1524.

⁶ The sad intelligence of so unlooked-for an event, threw the prince into the deepest affliction: for several days he shut himself up in his apartments, and refused all consolation in his solitude. But this useless grief was soon succeeded by the passion of revenge. No longer impeded by the war of Poland, from exerting the whole force of his empire against Kazan, he assembled a mighty army, of an hundred and fifty thousand fighting men, which he formed into two great divisions, under the command of seven or fourteen Voyevodes. One part of this gigantic force, was to proceed by land, and the other by water. But fortune utterly forsook the standard of the Russian prince. The greater part of this last division was demolished before it reached the walls of Kazan. To restrain their progress, the Tcheremissian Tatars, the allies of Sapha Guérei, had obstructed with large stones and trees, the passages where the islands narrow the course of the Volga. The vessels embarrassed by these obstacles ran foul of each other; while the Tcheremisses, in their light canoes, hovered around the Russians, and poured in clouds of arrows. In this moment of their entangle-

⁶ Levesque, tom. ii. p. 385, 386. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 266.

ment and confusion, others had climbed up the steep sides of the islands, and almost overwhelmed them by continually casting down beams and stones of an enormous weight. Those who escaped from the shattered barks, met with their death on the bank, while thirty thousand found their grave in the river. The cannon and the balls were drawn out of the river by the indefatigable Tcheremisses, and sent to Kazan as proofs of their decisive success.

While the land division, ignorant of their countrymen's destruction, was anxiously waiting their junction on the banks of the Sviaga, they were attacked by the Tatars, and after a severe engagement, the swords of the Russians proved superior to the arrows of the Tatar horse. Part of the vanquished fled, and were pursued even to the Volga, whose streams now proved the receptacle of Tatar despair; others fled to their forests, while the more fortunate regained in safety the walls of Kazan. It was conjectured, that the Tatars lamented the loss of forty thousand men in this bloody contest. Various parties of the Russians roamed about the country like prowling wolves in quest of prey, and their minds elated by their late victory, anticipated a more enlarged sphere of conquest and plunder on the arrival of the other division.

But these expectations were soon checked by the mortifying discovery of the real weakness of the Russian empire. Naked, spiritless, exhausted by thirst, hunger, and incessant fatigue, some were only saved from the wreck of the Volga division, to relate the sad fate of their countrymen, and the loss of that artillery, which they had flattered themselves would have crumbled into atoms the proud and rebellious city of Kazan. Thus failed this mighty expedition, which promised on its outset to have been attended with such complete success. The remaining division was so deeply dismayed by this unexpected news, that from the height of alacrity and confidence, they sunk into the utmost despair. Regardless of their former deeds of valour, they now determined to seek their safety by returning to Moscow; while the misery of famine accompanied their retreat, and perhaps the Tatars, whose united efforts must have spread devastation through their ranks.

Vassili had now received so many fatal checks to his ambition, that six tedious years were consumed before he could again bring into the field a sufficient force to attack Kazan. At last he assembled an army,

⁷ Levesque, tom. ii. p. 387, 388. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 267, 268.

which

which he committed to the care of thirty Voyevodes.

On the bed of sickness Sapha Guérei received an account of Vassili's proceedings: 1530. but he arose with activity to perform the functions of a general and a soldier. He first gave the necessary orders for defence, procured the aid of ten thousand Nogays, and then produced from both sides of the city entrenchments of sharp palisades, strongly supported by stones, and earth, and defended by ditches of considerable breadth and depth. *Ostrog* is the name which the Russians gave to this mode of construction; and to the great satisfaction of the khan, these works were finished by his Tatars before the arrival of the enemy. During the whole summer, the Russians assaulted the ostrog and city with adverse fortune, and the besieged would still have been impregnable, had their prudence equalled their valour: in the day they contended with ardour in the toil and danger of the defence, but in the night they were drowned in wine and sleep.

Their indulgences did not long remain a secret to the enemy, whose skill and vigilance were in the end deservedly crowned with success. Under cover of the friendly

night, some youths contrived to besmear with pitch and sulphur the palisades of the ostrog and the walls of the city, and then committed the whole to one general conflagration. By their bold dexterity, the attack was thus commenced; and so well were their motions concerted and performed, that the Tatars saw the enemy in the town before they had even time to grasp their arms, their last and precarious means of defence. Surprise appalled the courage of the Tatars: even their bravest warriors fell an easy prey in this unequal conflict; while the recollection of their former disgrace did not serve to abate the sanguinary rage of the Russians. If we may believe the report of the times, the conquerors did not sheathe their swords, until the death of sixty thousand Tatars proclaimed their victory and revenge.

The high-spirited Sapha Guérei, whose courage did not droop with his sinking fortunes, was blockaded in his castle; at the head of three thousand cavalry of approved valour, he gallantly cut his way in the night through the Russian army, and with many an honourable wound escaped to Crim, with his wife and children.

But

But Russia did not reap those advantages from the success of this expedition, as might have been expected. The whole number of inhabitants that was left in the defenceless city amounted only to fourteen thousand, according to the most authentic account. The Voyeyodes, fearful, it is said, of provoking the resistance of this small band, granted them peace, instead of seizing the hopeless town, which must infallibly have yielded to their army of an hundred thousand men. They levied a tribute of three years, and then withdrew their forces. The Prince Ivan Belski, chief of the Voyevodes, was accused of receiving a large bribe from the Tatars, to act this part so full of cowardice and infamy. This conduct cancelled all obligations due to his former services, and the grand prince wished to punish him with death; but he was saved at the urgent intercession of the metropolitan. Belski, however, spent five years in the gloom of a dungeon, for betraying the interests of his country.

Moscow soon afterwards beheld the arrival of the Tatar ambassadors, to solicit the confirmation of the late agreement; and, in order to secure the compliance of the grand prince,

* Levesque, tom. ii. p. 389, 390, 391. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 269.

they humbly requested his nomination to the vacant throne. Apprehensive of stirring up a second time their unbroken spirits to rebellion, should he again select Sheikh Ali, for their magistrate, who was as odious as he was contemptible to the Kazanites, he sent Tchin Ali, his brother, a boy, to Kazan, and with him the prince Vassili Penkof, as his director. But this imperfect system of administration was soon disregarded. Scarce a year of faint submission had elapsed, when the Kazanite Tatars again discovered their strength, and the Russians their weakness.

In a furious sedition, which once more agitated their capital, they pronounced Tchin Ali unqualified to reign; and, as the most effective way to ensure the execution of this
 1531. decree, massacred him, Penkof, and all their numerous retinue, and recalled Sapha Guérei, whose valour and strength, if it had been employed in the commission of the most heinous crimes, would still have been more acceptable than the pacific virtues, among a people who displayed but few traces of intellectual vigour. These multiplied disappointments probably hastened the death of Vassili, whose health had long been in a state of dangerous
 1533. decline. He died in the fifty-third year of his life, and in the twenty-eighth of an inglorious and unsuccessful reign: and in his

character can neither be discovered any model of shining virtue, or of memorable vice^o.

The insertion of this reign may be viewed by the severe critic as an ugly excrescence growing out from the subject of our work; but we were urged to this transgression, by the desire of proving circumstantially to the satisfaction of our readers, that the vital principle of Tatarian independence was not entirely destroyed, and that much remained to be done, much blood to be shed, and much ability to be displayed by the renowned son of Vassili, Ivan the Fourth, before he could complete the noble task, which had been so well begun by his grandfire.

^o The name of Czar was applied to Vassili, about the conclusion of his reign; but it was his son and successor, who formally substituted that title in the room of Grand Prince. This title, however, is not the invention of Russian pride, but was more familiar to the ears of other nations, if we may trust the researches of the celebrated Bayer: "Nempe, ut mea opinio fert, is titulus summæ majestatis fuit apud Sarmaticos populos; Persis *Czar* & *Czebar* est *thronus regius*. Et veteres Slavos quoque *Czebar* dixisse, Scylitres Curopalata auctor est." De Origine Russorum, in Comment. Academ. Petrop. tom. viii. p. 417.

REVOLUTION THE SIXTH.

The last Epoch of the Decline of the Tatars.—The Destruction of the Kingdom of Kazan and Astrakhan, in the Reign of Ivan IV. Vassilivitz, the first Czar, surnamed by the Russians, the Terrible,—by Foreigners, the Tyrant.

AFTER the loss of his first wife, Vassili had received the hand of the young Princess Helena, daughter of Vassili Glenki. The endowments of her mind and person had placed her beyond the general level of her sex; she possessed, with her beauty, a strong proportion of manly sense, activity, and resolution¹. But in the latter part of her administration, these qualities were entirely absorbed in the vortex of caprice, vanity, and injustice; while the *chastity* of Helena afforded ample materials to the pen of scandal. Two² sons, Ivan and Yury, were the issue of this marriage, who were left at the early age of four, destitute of paternal admonition.

¹ Oderborn in his effete, vague, and declamatory history of the Czar Ivan IV. calls her præstantis formæ virginem, lib. i. p. 250. Joannis Basilides Magni Moschoviæ Ducis vita. See this work in Rerum Moscov. Comment. Le Clerc, jeune encore, belle & sensible, tom. ii. p. 272.

² Levesque, tom. iii. p. 1—4. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 273.

In times less curbed by law, and less faintly marked by reason and policy, neither of these infants perhaps would have assumed the honours of a regal name. But the Russians had now been taught, in the school of adversity, to value the advantages of a fixed line of succession; and therefore the will of Vassili, which gave the sceptre to Ivan, was ratified by public consent. By this testament also, the lovely Helena was left the guardian of her son and the empire of Russia; while, to direct by his wisdom and to awe by his valour, Mikhaïl Glenski, her uncle, was called to the support of her authority¹.

On the moment that life ceased to animate the frame of their brother, George and Andrew, uncles to the royal infant, took their oaths of inviolable fidelity on the Cross: ambition, however, soon set loose the first from his protestations of submission; he scorned to obey, when he conceived he ought to command; but he courted power with all the arrogance, and without the strength, of an Asiatic despot. Instead of gaining the suffrages of the boyars by his liberality and condescension, he ordered the greatest part of them, by his secretary, to hasten to his presence with the promises of allegiance; while

¹ De Rebus Moschoviticis, lib. i. chap. xi. p. 67.

his

his vain confidence neglected to enforce his pretensions on the contumacious, by the illegal though weighty influence of the sword. His commands were therefore disregarded, and all his airy fabrics of dominion overturned in the solitude of a prison, where he passed the remainder of his days in contempt and obscurity.

The Russians had not only been accustomed to behold the widows of their sovereigns shut themselves up in monasteries, but to lay aside all remembrance of their former greatness: but opposite spectacles, which seemed to deride the revered institutions of former ages, were now displayed to the court and to the people;—
 1534. Helena, instead of retiring to a monastery, was seen to hold the reins of government with firm though gentle hands, and to dictate laws from that mouth which so well could speak the language of tenderness, with the amorous Kniaz Obolenski, better known by the name of Ovtchina*.

But this intercourse of love and pleasure did not escape the condemnation of the boyars. The regent heard their reproaches with a mind more bent on vengeance than amendment. Her aged uncle was among the first to experience the dreadful effects of a

* Joann. Basil. vita, lib. i. p. 251.

woman's hatred. Bred in the toil, danger, and glory of the camp, with the honest bluntness of a soldier, he taxed her with her guilt, and begged of her, if she could not overcome this licentious passion for the minion, at least to indulge it with some regard to the laws of decency and caution. This advice served only to exasperate the fierce passions of his niece, without reforming her vicious propensities. Under a false accusation of his casting an ambitious eye on the throne, he discovered and felt the cruel hatred of Helena and the favourite. From a court which professed the most blind obedience to a revengeful woman, innocence could not hope its acquittal. The eyes of her uncle were put out by the sentence of his judges; and in the monastery of Troitsa, his misfortunes soon afterwards placed him beyond the reach of female oppression.

The punishment and death of her uncle became the signal for revolt. The prince Semen Belski and many other noblemen abandoned Russia, and fled into Poland, enraged at her abuse of power, which left no vestige of her former sense and virtue; and the empire, which had been raised to so flourishing an height by the third Ivan, had nearly been once more threatened by the fatal

fatal tempest of intestine feuds and devastations.

Among the number of illustrious persons ruined by the intricate arts of creatures, sound, alas! in every age, and in every court⁵, who weave their web of mischief for each word and action which reproaches or threatens to repress their disgraceful influence, was⁶ Andrew, the only paternal uncle of the unconscious Ivan. In the interval of these shameful occurrences which so deeply agitated the capital, the Tatars of Kazan had gradually increased their power, and already displayed some movements which alarmed the court of Russia. Courtiers were then dispatched from the regent to Andrew, to demand his attendance at the court. But under a counterfeit illness, he sought to evade the
 1537. odious summons. The physician, however sent

⁵ The illustrious Young, in his tragedy, "The Revenge," which exhibits such a rare union of genius and art, has a peculiar happiness in his ideas and images, when characterizing the arts of such men, the effects of which are generally so rapid and decisive :

—————"Ye subtle dæmons, who reside
 In courts, and do your work with bows and smiles,
 That little engin'ry, more mischievous
 Than fleets and armies, and the cannon's murder,
 Teach me to look a lie," &c. &c.

⁶ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 6, 7, 8. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 175, 176.

to him at his own request, disclosed his real situation to Helena. But, while an officer of Andrew was commissioned to repair to her in order to obviate every prejudice that might arise from the report of the physician, some of her trusty spies who had been planted around the domains of this prince, arrived before the friend of Andrew to tell their royal mistress, that the following day had been fixed for the flight of the prince into Poland.

⁷ Informed of their report, and of the intention of Helena to seize his person, he fled to Novgorod, and thence issued letters to the nobles, which principally urged the disgrace of acknowledging the authority of an infant, and of an ostentatious cruel woman, who alone submitted her conduct to the object of her scandalous attachment, whilst his rank and experience were entirely overlooked, both of which so justly entitled him to be placed at the head of the councils and armies. But the majority of the Boyars were not prepared for rebellion: a few only repaired to the place of rendezvous with intentions agreeable to the wishes of Andrew, but with

⁷ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 9—14, Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 277—280.

means far from being calculated to shake off their dependence.

Ovtchina hastened to take the field against the rebels. When the two armies faced each other, the conduct of Andrew, from the consciousness of his own weakness, was marked with hesitation, fear, and distrust. After balancing, with a trembling hand, his own advantages with those of the enemy, his presumption, unsupported by that firmness of mind which no unforeseen disasters should weaken, became the natural cause and forerunner of his submission to Ovtchina, from whom he only sought his personal safety. By this cowardly act he completely destroyed himself and his band, whom despair might have rendered successful, by uniting their counsels, and invigorating their arms.

Ovtchina, practised in deceit and cunning, conducted his captive to Moscow; the reproaches, doubtless concerted, which he received from the court, revealed at once to the disconsolate Andrew the full horror of his situation. The assurances of personal safety, made by Ovtchina, were disregarded; his colleagues, after undergoing the torture and knout, were then released from their sufferings; while he was cast into a dungeon, and left there to lament that want of constancy and discernment which proved so fatal

fatal to himself and to his followers. Helena did not survive her victim a month. She died, after a reign of four years, with the infamy of having shed the blood of almost every one that was noble, great, or good*. If we may credit the history of the times, her dissolute life was finished by poison; while the partner of her pleasures was condemned to be cut to pieces in the market-place by the hands of the common hangman*.

With the years of Ivan, his woes increased. On the death of Helena, and even during her lifetime, his vast empire was oppressed by Mikhaïl Toutchkof, and the princes Ivan and Vassili Chouïski, who rivalled each other in vice, corruption, and cruelty. While the hours of Helena were consumed in a round of sensual gratifications, they had contrived to possess themselves of her power. The royal treasury was plundered, every principle of law and justice was trampled upon with impunity, and the most illustrious persons of the state were a prey to their brutal fury. Emboldened by their success, they seized the

* Oderborn thus relates the death of a woman, whose conduct as regent had so deservedly excited the public abhorrence: "*Post omnibus invisa, et infidiis circumventa, vitam veneno, ut meruerat, amisit;*" lib. i. p. 252.

* In partes dissectus. *De Rebus Moschoviticis*, lib. i. cap. xi. p. 65.

young monarch, under the flimsy pretence of guarding him from the dangers of conspiracy; and on all occasions treated him more like a dependent than a prince. Even the virtues became offensive to the sight of these tyrants; and a long list of the friends of Vassili were either proscribed or murdered, because they had deserved and received the affection of their master. Indifferent even to all forms of respect and decency, it was no uncommon spectacle to behold Vassili Chouiski, carelessly reclining on the bench or bed of the late sovereign, while the knees of the royal Ivan served for his footstool.

But when the faint glimmerings of reason dawned upon the mind of Ivan, his wounded spirit became incapable of repose, until he had revenged these accumulated insults, and wrested his oppressed country from the hands of these usurpers. The first act in which he secretly aimed at independence, was to send Chouiski to Vladimir under the pretext of overawing the Tatars. The haughty Chouiski listened and obeyed, willing to shew Ivan, that his absence from the court could not impair his power.

On his departure, the young prince placed near his person Ivan Belski, kinsman to the traitor Semen; and admitted him alone to the
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the dangerous honour of sharing his confidence. But the precipitate return of Chouiski, who had received an account of Ivan's conduct in his absence, instantly clouded the rising fortune of this favourite. He entered the capital with a retinue which displayed all the pomp of a sovereign. In a council composed of his dependents, he exercised without disguise the whole executive power. In one inhuman mandate, the expeditious rage of the usurper completed the ruin of the friends of Ivan, before the prince had received the mortifying intelligence of his return. All of them disappeared, by exile, confinement, or assassination. Belski experienced the first of the punishments; nor did the enraged Ivan know the sentence of his favourite, until the arrest of some friends at the door of his own apartments shewed him he was again a slave to the jealous tyranny of Chouiski.

The rigour employed against the venerable metropolitan implies the part he took in the interests of Belski. In the middle of the night, the followers of Chouiski pursued the chief of the church into the chamber of the powerless Ivan, from thence they hurried into a convent at Bielozero, to which city, Belski the favourite was also banished, whose hopes of

deliverance were soon afterwards ended by a violent death.

¹⁰ But while the bowels of the empire were thus torn by Chouiski, while the youthful Ivan was brooding over his own injuries and those of his country in neglected solitude, the threats of a foreign invader aroused all ranks, and filled them with alacrity and fervour in the cause of their religion and independence. This enthusiastic ardour was enkindled by the enterprising Sapha Guérei, khan of Crim, who, won by the solicitations of the king of Poland, broke his late patched up peace with Russia, with unfeigned joy. To this step he was also urged by the prince Semen Belski, kinsman of the late favourite, whose dissatisfaction at the conduct of the deceased regent had led him first to abandon, and then to become the mortal foe of his country. The artillery and musqueteers
1541. accompanying this formidable expedition were provided by the Ottoman court; and already had the revengeful fancy of Belski painted the picture of his country in ruins from the destructive progress of the Tatars.

²⁰ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 15—18. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 281, 282.

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But their mighty preparations were unfolded in time to the Russian court, and the orders to frustrate the designs of the Tatar obtained the strenuous support of all men, who were either actuated by the laudable or selfish motives of patriotism and interest. Troops, ammunition, and artillery were supplied by the active zeal of the cities ; and the nobles, for once, lost all recollection of their private quarrels and hostilities, in their eager desire to repel Sapha Guéri.

The active khan had already crossed the Oka with his whole horde ; when to his utter surprise and consternation, an advanced corps of the enemy presented themselves on the opposite bank, while fresh swarms of Russian troops were hastening down to join them. The Tatars, who had indulged the hopes of an easy conquest of the provinces, were panic-struck at the hourly increasing force of their enemies. The khan, in his rage and disappointment, vented the most sanguinary threats on the traitor Belski, which were afterwards executed, for instigating him to so rash an undertaking. The whole night was passed by the terrified Tatars, in continual alarms : nor were their apprehensions lessened at the dawn of day, when they discovered the hostile bank lined with additional troops, who had joined their

countrymen in the night. The khan and his Tatars now only endeavoured to obtain a safe retreat. To assist the swiftness of their flight, they disencumbered themselves from their arms, and provisions, and abandoned their worn-out horses; and to impede their pursuers, they broke down their waggons. So lively were the impressions of their terrors, that they never halted until they had swam the Don, whose broad and friendly stream checked the progress of the Russians.

2544. The important moment was now at last arrived, when Ivan grasped his sceptre with the strength and independence of a man¹¹; nurtured in the school of adversity, his tyrants had unknowingly taught him the valuable lesson of finding the resources of redress in his own genius and presence of mind. At the youthful age of fourteen¹², a period at which the human character is generally loose and indeterminate, he seems to have possessed all the confirmed attributes of an active and enterprising manhood.

In a full assembly of his nobles, and in a speech delivered with the most impressive

¹¹ ——— brisa les liens de la tutelle, où son caractère indépendant ne pouvoit plus être resserré. Lacombe, p. 41.

¹² One writer makes him possess the absolute sway of his ancestors even at the early age of twelve; "Puer adhuc duodecennis habenas imperii cepessivit;" De Rebus Moschoviticiis, lib. i. cap. xii. p. 65.

dignity and freedom, he thus proclaimed his intention to expose himself in the defence of his rights, his empire, and his independence. " Issue of the blood of Rurik, I am the sole heir of my ancestors, and you have offered me the homage of allegiance, even in my cradle. But the unprotected state of my infancy has given ample scope for turbulent and designing men to possess the royal power; and their seizure of my authority has been pregnant with manifold evils. These enemies of peace and order have filled with scandalous oppression the government, to which I have been called by right and by nature; they have confounded the prerogatives of the prince with his subjects; they have mingled in one common mass, my possessions with their domains, the revenues of the state with their own houses; they have driven from my person those brave men who were the best support of my government: but the period of their iniquities is finished; the reins of government are now held by my hands; and my subjects shall find, that I wish to stand forward as the protector of the innocent, the punisher of the guilty." His voice was heard and obeyed¹³; and his first mandate,
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¹³ See Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 284. Such is the brief and imperfect account presented to us by Levesque, and Le

by which he pleased the minds of all reflecting men, was to condemn Chouiski to the block, whose name and power had so lately acknowledged no superior. His numerous partizans either shared the same fate, or were kept in confinement, or sent into exile.

Thus fell, beneath the first efforts of a boy, a confederacy which not only threatened to overturn the throne, but to weaken the firmest foundations of the empire itself. The character of the court was changed with the fortune of Ivan. A certain Boutourlin presumed to utter the language of disrespect, for which he was punished with the loss of his tongue. This act of severity soon taught the Boyars to obey their sovereign.

But Ivan, compelled from his unhappy situation, to rule over his subjects with the rod of terror, contracted that inflexible severity of character, which no improvement of his mind could ever efface. "His animal spirits transported him beyond all bounds of modera-

Clerc, of this extraordinary transaction; yet it seems highly probable that some secret combination must have existed among the nobility adverse to the power of Chouiski, which assured the young Ivan of an effectual support in this hazardous exertion of his independent authority.

¹⁴ Levesque, tom. ii. p. 19, 20. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 286, 287.

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tion, while in his resentments he was so brutal, that he disgraced humanity. Raised from the depth of despair to the height of prosperity, he rolled headlong on in vice and folly, until almost every remnant of virtue was eradicated from his mind. The remembrance of his severe captivity enhanced the charms of freedom. But in acknowledging her gifts, he displayed the fury of a savage, instead of the gratitude of a rational being. Surrounded by those who were of the same thoughtless age, and of the same wicked propensities, he frequently disturbed the tranquillity of Moscow, by a series of cruelties too inhuman to relate. But to cast a friendly veil over these frailties of his youth, we must attribute his licentious conduct to the degenerate tameness of his boyars, who, had they spoken the harshest truth with the firmness of men, would have corrected a temper, which, though naturally violent, was still capable of amendment, and a heart which, though devoted to the wildest excesses of rage, was still susceptible of some good impressions.

To what height of violence the unbridled passions of Ivan would have conducted him, and in what manner they would have terminated, we shall not presume to conjecture; for we lose sight of the first of historical duties,

duties, if we enter the intricate and endless paths of speculation : but his marriage, which
 1547. was solemnized with his coronation, on which memorable day he first assumed the title of the Czar¹⁵, produced for a time a surprising alteration in his conduct and manners ; and at the age of sixteen the public attention was turned with fond regard towards their monarch, whose riper years prognosticated a constellation of virtues. To the mild influence of his wife¹⁶, who had obtained a happy dominion over her husband, must be attributed the merit of this reformation.

More wise than eloquent, more persevering than hazardous, the daughter of Roman Yuryvitz, directed the attention of Ivan to objects of utility, and taught him the just sentiments of contempt for his profligate associates. Then men of talents and of different kinds, and

¹⁵ It may not be impertinent here to remark, that our attention to the ear and eye of the reader obliges us, however improper, to put *cz* for *tz*, in the orthography of this royal name. In conformity to this choice, we shall invariably write the titles of the wife, son, and daughter of the Czar, in the following manner, *czarina*, *czarovitz*, *czarevna*, although the Russians style them *tzaritzza*, *tzarevitch*, and *tzarevna*. In all words of Russian origin, I have indifferently copied the most approved writers on Russian history.

¹⁶ “ Dès qu'elle eut pris de l'ascendant sur son esprit,” says Le Clerc, “ elle osa lui donner des conseils. La sensibilité, l'humanité, la sagesse les dictèrent.”

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of incorruptible integrity surrounded the throne of Ivan ; while the genius to command, and the wisdom to obey, were shewn by Ivan ". Not flattery, or the disgraceful art of amusing a debauched prince, was here the sure and ready road to preferment ; rank and fortune, all bowed with homage before the genuine offspring of merit, while buffoons and sycophants were banished from a court, whose labours for the good of the people, left no interval for the admission of their tributes of unmeaning merriment or of servile panegyric ".

" When Ivan had gradually restored the 1547. health of his government, which had been hastening to a rapid decay from civil discord and oppression, his daring soul resolved to crush for ever the ancient tyrants of his country, and to secure their kingdom to

" For a contrast to this civilized picture, see the furious invective of his implacable enemy Oderborn Joann. Basilvita, lib. i. p. 253, 254.

" The words of Levesque are lively and expressive : " Ce n'était plus la flatterie, ce n'était plus l'art d'amuser un prince dissipé qui conduisaient aux honneurs ; les dignités, la fortune, allaient au devant du mérite, et les bouffons, les flatteurs furent chassés d'une cour où les travaux qu'exige le bonheur du peuple, ne laissaient plus le temps de les écouter."

" Levesque, tom. iii. p. 25, 26, 27.

himself

himself and his posterity ; and the temper of the times favoured his ambition. Each day the nobles of Kazan, inflamed by party zeal, arrived at the palace of the Czar, to provoke and precipitate the ruin of their country, and to profess their attachment to his person.

But to proceed with accuracy in the fate of Kazan, we must revert to the conduct of the Tatars in the administration of the ductile Helena. During the latter part of her regency, several Tatar princes, discontented with the government of Sapha Guérci, had resorted to the Russian court to urge the downfall of their sovereign. And while these rebellious subjects, in language dictated by hatred and despair, stimulated Russia against their distracted country, to complete their folly, they implored the pardon of their late prince Sheikh Ali. This prince had been recompensed by the late Vassili with considerable appanages for his disappointment of a throne, from which he had been so deservedly expelled by his mean vices and bloody cruelties. His envy however of the superior fortune of his brother Eu-Ali exceeded his gratitude ; and his unsuccessful labours to excite a sedition, removed him to a prison in Bielozeró. The more temporing

rising policy of the regent restored him to his liberty, and her judgment suggested, with some degree of probability, that the rights which Shiekh-Ali had already possessed to the Kazanite kingdom, and which, though dormant, were not extinguished, would alarm the fears of Sapha Guérei, when he saw them upheld by the Russian court.

Sheikh Ali was therefore released from his confinement, and conducted to Moscow, where he received an audience from the prince and his mother. In this singular interview, he prostrated himself before them, repeatedly struck the earth with his forehead, and on his knees entreated their forgiveness of his faults, with expressions far more appropriate to the character of a slave than of a sovereign, who, while he nobly avows his errors, and his intentions of reforming them, yet should never lose sight of the dignity of his station. In such a conduct we are at a loss to discover the haughty demeanor of the race of Zingis Khan, and that stern ferocity which struck terror and obedience into the hearts of the long-subjected Russians. But in the continuance of a minority exposed to all the horrors of domestic discord, the opportunities are few, and the season unpropitious to pursue with success the designs of external grandeur. Thus, no real fruits of
victory

victory were gathered by the regent, and no junction of the mutinous Tatars was productive of any decisive advantage. Each might with justice boast their petty successes, and a hollow peace at last terminated their hostilities.

²⁰ When the sceptre alone resided in the hands of the happy Ivan, his genius soon perceived, that on the ruins of the Tatar sway could only be erected the firm foundation of Russian greatness. But to trample for ever under his feet a nation, which had so long contracted, darkened, and almost blotted out the name of his country from European people, this Charles the Seventh of Russia shot at once the double arrow of death to the freedom of the Tatars and his proud Boyars, by his introduction of a standing force, for the independence of his throne and civilization ²¹ of his empire.

A body of troops regularly trained to military subordination, and who were instructed to place all their hopes of reward in royal

²⁰ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 28—31. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 290, 291.

²¹ It is the decisive opinion of that great philosopher, Dr. Adam Smith, that a barbarous country can only be suddenly and tolerably civilized by the establishment of a well regulated standing army. See his profound and instructive work, *Wealth of Nations*, fifth edition, vol. ii. p. 221.

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favour and discernment, had never yet seconded the military operations of the most ambitious descendant of the house of Rurik. Before this interesting period, the nobles were obliged to encounter the dangers and hardships of the field. The most eminent among their order, under the name of Voyevodes, executed the functions of general officers, or else received the appellation of *Golovy*; which name answered to the rank of colonel. The rest performed the service of private soldiers: the most opulent maintaining themselves at their own expence; the others were remunerated with fiefs, named *pomesiie*, and an inconsiderable pay in silver. In the last ranks of the nobility were placed the *Dvoriane Gorodskie*, or the nobles of the city; and the *Dièti Boïarskie*, infant Boyars, so called because they acted in the field under the guidance of the Boyars, as sons obey the commands of their parents. Their power and situation were inferior to the lowest class of the nobility. The proprietors of fiefs were followed by boors, scantily equipped with arms and clothing, and utterly destitute even of the appearance of discipline. Each noble was compelled to bring with him a number of men, divided into foot and horse, in proportion to the value of their landed possessions.

sions. ²² The labourers, the inhabitants of the city, and above all, the merchants, were never summoned to action but in times of emergency and danger. But the safety of the state was menaced with perils great as immediate, and the church ²³ was called upon for a copious supply of men and horses.

The levying of the troops which each city was to furnish, constituted a part of the duty of the voyevode or governor. They were composed chiefly of people from the dregs of mankind, whose wild natures, impatient of controul, soon made them relinquish the standard under which they had enlisted. An army therefore which displayed so loose a spirit of association, could never expect to exert itself with vigour and success, but against an adversary who laboured under the same manifest disadvantages.

To obviate defects so unfavourable to the hopes of conquest and renown, the enlarged

²² An historian, however, whose authenticity is respectable, assures us, "*Agricolam sine colonum nullum, nullum et jam mercatorem in militiam legit.*" See *Moscoviæ Comment. cap. xxvi. p. 129.*

²³ See *Estat de l'Empire de Russie, et Grande Duché de Moscovie, par le Capitaine Margaret, à Paris 1607, p. 26.*

views of Ivan formed, in the year fifteen hundred and forty-five, the celebrated militia of *Strelitzes*, which corps may be considered as the first bold and masterly establishment of a standing army in the empire of Russia. The bow had hitherto been used by his subjects as the most efficacious instrument in battle: but he armed them with the more serviceable fusil, practised them in military evolutions with unremitting attention, and taught them to depend more on their discipline than their numbers and courage. A part of this new appointed force was destined to guard the person of their monarch; the rest served in the armies. Instead therefore of those ancient bands assembled in such haste and confusion, ignorant even of the rudiments of war, and restless under the yoke of discipline, Russia beheld, for the first time, soldiers alike accustomed to every inclemency of weather, to the vigorous and steady operations of regular service, and ready for action at the slightest warning of their monarch.

A short time after these capital occurrences, the factions which weakened the kingdom of Kazan, influenced more by their violent passions than reason, united themselves against their khan Sapha Gueréi. His expulsion was the consequence of this capricious and momentary combination. In the court of his father-

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in-law, chief of the horde of Nogais, he found a secure asylum from the pursuits of his enemies; but his daring soul still longed for the more dangerous cares of empire. By the forces of his father-in-law the siege of Kazan was formed. But, after many attempts, they found the besieged too strong, for them to produce any effect.

The untractable Kazanites no longer possessed of a sovereign, reclaimed the protection of the Czar, and requested his appointment of Sheikh Ali to their vacant throne. But under the shew of returning allegiance they concealed their intentions of murder and revenge²²; apprized of the approach of Sheikh Ali, and clad in complete armour under their loose and flowing habits, they met him on the road, and accompanied him with every mark of respect and honour as far as the city, where they dropped the mask of their dissimulation: Sheikh Ali was rudely separated from his hundred Murfas, whom he had brought with him, and who were left in the

²² "Etaient-ils de bonne foi, ou voulaient-ils seulement se faire livrer un prince qui leur était odieux et par ses anciennes cruautés, et parce que la Russie s'en servait contre eux comme d'un épouvantail? C'est ce qu'il serait difficile de décider." The words of Levesque, tom. iii. page 31. We cannot here applaud the sagacity of our Doctor historicus, as in our mind their conduct so easily unties the knot of this question.

strength of a prison to lament their own and master's misfortune; while two or three thousand of his Tatars, who followed him from Kassimof, were butchered in the country.

Two Voyevodes alone returned from this cavalcade to relate to the Czar the disgrace of Sheikh Ali, and the cruelty of the Tatars. ²³ Six whole months were passed, by this shadow of regal power, in fear and mortification; for through all his festivals and costly presents, through all his ostentatious shew of kindness, the Tatars plainly saw the villainy of his mind. They knew that his fears alone gave birth to his prodigal generosity and benevolence, and therefore they were determined that he should have the double shame of stooping to the arts of deceit, and of reaping no benefit from them. Various were the stratagems to provoke him to some act of violence which might authorize them to kill him. But his unconquerable love of life disappointed their most sanguine expectations.

Hopeless of overcoming their deep-rooted aversion, he now only sought to effect his deliverance. He therefore invited the princes,

²³ *Levesque*, tom. iii. p. 32, 33. *Le Clerc*, tom. ii. p. 292.

the mufas, or chiefs, and principal merchants, to a most sumptuous entertainment, while tables, profusely loaded with strong liquors, were spread for the people in the courts of his palace and market places. The chiefs of the nation retired to their houses overpowered by excessive drinking; and the streets were likewise strewed with people, deprived of their reason from the same cause. In this universal scene of intoxication²⁶ the palace and the gates of the city were alike deserted by their respective guards. In the night Sheikh Ali effected his escape, with a few mufas, perhaps chiefly composed of those who had participated his happier fortunes at Kaffimof; and, incredible as it may seem, three days elapsed before the Kazanites discovered the loss of their intended victim. A Tatar of the name of Tchoura, the abettor of his flight, was beat to death in the first sally of their astonishment and rage; and Sapha Gueréi was again recalled.

²⁷ The Czar seized the earliest opportunity of punishing the treason of the Kazanites.

²⁶ The intoxication of the ancient Scythians was proverbial. The Spartans say, that the Cleomenes by communicating with them, first became drunk and afterwards mad. *Εκθύσει, δι, βμλησασθαι μιν, ακρηστοτη, και εκ ταυτ ματαιωαι.* See the sixth book of Herodotus. In this respect perhaps the reader may think the Tatars did not disgrace their ancestors.

²⁷ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 34—39—43—45. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 293—297—299.

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When the snows had disappeared from off the fields, he dispatched to Kazan a great body of troops armed with pikes, and some companies of Strelitzes, whose actions resembled the desultory attacks of a banditti, more than the systematic operations of a regular army. The vast plains inhabited by the Tcheremisses presented the odious spectacle of uniform devastation. In one of his grand hunting matches, Sapha Gueréi himself had nearly been captured; while three thousand of his men were cut in pieces, his tents, provisions, and baggage became the spoil of the foes, and he himself, assisted by ten followers, found with great difficulty, a shelter under the walls of Kazan.

At the potent call of revenge and safety, twenty thousand men soon surrounded his standard. The Russians, informed of their preparations, lay concealed with great secrecy and precaution. Three days of uncommon fatigue were spent by the Kazanites in search of the enemy. At last, overpowered by heat and exhausted by labour, they turned their horses into the pastures, and resigned themselves to a fatal sleep, near to the spot which the enemy had chosen for ambush. Issuing from their ambuscade, the Russians came upon them with horrid outcries, and cut the greatest part of them to pieces. The sword

of slaughter was not sheathed until seventeen thousand men were slain, and two thousand taken prisoners. The forests sheltered the remainder.

But while the Russians seemed to have subdued the Kazanites on every side, they again revived with an increase of fury and of numbers, and, in their turn, came upon their
1550. fierce invaders. But in the midst of these bloody conflicts Sapha Gueréi terminated his career of ambition by a fall from his horse. To Sumbec, the youngest and best beloved of his wives, he committed his doubtful sceptre until her infant son should attain the age of manhood.

The impatient Ivan flew to arms under the vain expectation that his youth would be signalized by an easy victory over an enemy whose sex rendered her in his eyes, an object of weakness and contempt. Over the hard surface of measureless snows, this army arrived at Kazan, considerably diminished by cold and toil. Its military appearance, however, might still be deemed formidable. For three whole months they attacked the city; but after all their repeated exertions, the besieged still maintained and improved their advantages. The artillery employed at this siege was more productive of sound than effect; the ignorance of the age having constructed

fructed it of too enormous a size to produce any decisive advantage. Ivan was at last compelled to acknowledge, that the siege could only be carried on with a doubtful success, until the thaw permitted the erection of batteries. To his great mortification he was therefore obliged to depart from Kazan.

This expedition, so sterile in the produce of glory, proved, in the end, highly serviceable to himself and his country. Returning to Moscow he perceived near the mouth of the Sviaga, a steep mountain which seem fortified by nature. On this favorable spot, the distance being only five leagues from Kazan, the Russian monarch resolved to build a small city, which would enable him speedily to achieve a complete and permanent conquest. Had his ancestors known the advantage derived from a frontier fortress, the reign of their foreign masters would have sooner perhaps been abridged and abolished.

Arrived at Moscow, his most serious thoughts were bent on his new design, the execution of which he entrusted to the zeal of Sheikh Ali. The commands of a prince who punishes with rigour the slightest delay, are sure to be executed with singular dispatch. The work therefore went on with unwearied ardour; whole groves of trees were quickly

1551. cut down, shaped, and squared. These works being finished, Sheikh Ali, whose superintendence of the business had so much contributed to animate the diligence of the workmen, provided barks of uncommon strength and capaciousness for these huge pieces of timber which were to be fashioned into the form of a citadel; and, at the head of a considerable army, he sailed down the Volga to protect the artificers.

Under the friendly cover of a thick fog, the Tatar deputy reached the foot of the mountain, and soon put himself in such a posture of defence as mocked the efforts of the enemy. While such was the dexterity of the workmen, that in the short space of a month, they united these prepared parts of the floating city. Svajsk was the name of this important place, so called from that river watering the base of the mountain; and from the strength and convenience of the situation, the population soon increased. A monastery, a principal church and six of an inferior cast, decorated the rising beauty of Svajsk, and many buildings were raised at the private expence of noblemen, merchants, and persons of every rank. While scarce three days had elapsed from the time of the construction of the citadel, when the chiefs of the Tcheremissian mountaineers brought down their tributes
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and acknowledged the authority of Ivan. The Russians made an estimate of the new subjects of their Czar, and it amounted to forty thousand fighting men.

This new raised city was beheld with terror by the inhabitants of Kazan, and the alarm was increased by the peasants who incessantly flocked from all parts of the country, to seek an asylum in the capital. But the firmness of the regent was immovable in this hour of trial. Aided by the zeal and counsels of her lover Oulou-Kochak, a son of the Crimean Khan; Sumbec increased the strength of her fortifications, issued orders for the levying of an army; and deriving less comfort from her real situation than from the resources of her mind, had already removed, by the power of her own opinion, the Russians not only from Svajsk, but also from the whole of the kingdom of Kazan.

But the Tatars, though strong in numbers, were weak from their fears; and as their courage declined, they grew more insolent to the regent. Oulou-Kochak, whose noble spirit sought to animate the Kazanites to toil and to danger, now experienced that he was the object of their greatest hatred. In despair therefore of rendering any essential service to his mistress, and sensible that his stay would only promote some insurrection which would
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terminate in his death, he abruptly left the ungrateful city, attended by his own people. His retreat served not to moderate their resentment. They treacherously revealed his route to Sheikh Ali, who overtook him between the Don and Volga. The engagement was for some time maintained with great valour and alternate success. The Russian numbers at last prevailed; and the fall of five thousand Tatars, the capture of their leader, his family, and three hundred chieftains of his nation, proclaimed the decisive victory of the deputy of Ivan. They were sent to Moscow in chains as trophies of his success. The prince commanded their conversion to christianity, and on their refusal he condemned them to the death of common malefactors. All were involved in this arbitrary decree, except the wife and children of the prince, whose prompt obedience insured their safety and reward.

When her favourite was gone, the Tatars impelled by their cowardice, hourly importuned their royal mistress to share her heart and government with the now formidable Sheikh-Ali. Her resistance for a long time was maintained by the hope that some gleams of good fortune would break above this dark horizon, but she was admonished by state necessity, that private feelings must sometimes yield

yield to public welfare, or in this case to public shame. Her acquiescence to their unmanly applications produced a peace, and the day was now looked for with impatience that should unite the fates of the cautious Sheikh Ali and the daring Sumbec.

But the heart of this princess was enslaved by the dæmon of malignity. As a mark of respect to her future husband, she sent him several sorts of refreshments. But the Tatar, whose mind was not so wholly engrossed by love as to be inattentive to the suggestions of prudence, first imparted a portion of her gifts to a dog; the death of the animal attested the guilt of the regent of Kazan. And we also learn from the evidence of the Kazanites, that among other gifts was a shirt worked by her hand of mischief, which, placed on the back of a criminal by the suspicious prince, finished his life in the most hideous convulsions. But whatever truth there might be for this diabolical story, the deputies disavowed their knowledge of it in the name of the chiefs and people, and declared the revengeful Sumbec unworthy of her nation and throne. On this declaration thirty thousand men marched into the city of Kazan, and surrounded the palace. By the orders of Sheikh Ali, the regent and her son were sent prisoners to the capital of Russia. We are ignorant

ignorant of the fate of the mother, but the young prince soon after the irretrievable loss of his kingdom, received the sacrament of baptism under the name of Alexander.

Accompanied to Kazan by a Voyevode, twenty-two thousand of his Tatars, and five thousand of Strelitzes, the contemptible Sheikh Ali again shewed himself the determined foe to justice and humanity. Raised above fear by the assiduous fidelity of the Strelitzes, who guarded his palace both night and day, and secured from the retreat of his victims, by chosen sentinels posted at the different gates of the city, and the keys of the town being deposited in the hands of the Voyevode, this slave of Russia doomed to an untimely grave all those who were loved, trusted, or respected by their countrymen; each day was marked by the same horrid repetition of murder; but his crimes at last engendered a conspiracy, which finally hurled him from his blood-stained throne.

Excited by ambition, courage, and capacity, Tchapkoun, a Tatar prince in the service of Ivan, repaired to Kazan, with the consent of his master, under the pretence of receiving a valuable bequest; but his real designs only tended to blow those sparks of discontent at Kazan into an open rebellion. By the representations of this faithless subject, Sheikh

Ali was commanded to appear at the court of Ivan, with his army and Voyerode, to clear himself from the crime of treason; and three thousand men, the advanced guard of the Voyerodes, who were deputed to the vacant administration of Kazan, by his artifices were admitted into the city and then sacrificed to his ambition.

Yet this event, however beneficial to his cause, was soon followed by another, which ruined all his plans. Sheikh Ali, having discovered the plot which occasioned his return, contrived to allure five hundred of its supporters to Svajsk, under pretext of giving them a friendly farewell, and on their approach, he commanded his troops to massacre all of them but ninety or a hundred, who were sent to Moscow for his justification. This act not only afterwards sealed his pardon with Ivan, but procured him an honourable retreat to Kaffimof, while Tchapkoun's sanguine hopes of obtaining the dignity of Khan were for ever destroyed by the Kazanites placing in the vacant throne Idigur son to Kazim, who ruled over the celebrated kingdom of Astrakan.

²⁵ The formidable revolt of Kazan now claimed the undivided attention of Ivan. To

²⁵ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 46—52. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 300—304.

the wisdom of his beloved empress he committed his whole authority ; and with a mind irrecoverably bent on the destruction of the city, and with a judgment matured by experience, he took the field on the seventeenth of June. The season of the year, the ardour and the discipline of the troops inflamed to the highest pitch of enthusiasm by the presence of their gallant young monarch, all conspired to promise complete success. The Crimean Khan anxiously wished to make a diversion in favour of the new-elected prince of Kazan ; his courage however did not assimilate with his inclinations, although it enticed him as far as Toulâ. But when the news came that the Russians were advancing to meet him, he declined the unequal contest, and his retreat was followed with considerable loss from the activity of his pursuers. The army resumed their march towards Kazan. In their progress the lives of many had been endangered by a scarcity of bread ; but on their arrival at Svaijsk, the Czar must have felt and might have praised the salutary effects of his improvements ; since by the wisdom of his plans, an inhospitable mountain was now converted into an obedient city, whose convenience of quarters and abundance of provisions relieved the weary and half-starved Russians.

Russians. Their artillery was transported down the Volga.

The city of Kazan, whose lofty top overhangs the river Kazanka, is surrounded by an immense meadow; along which the troops of the Czar were spread. Her walls were defended by thirty thousand of the bravest troops of the khan. The Russians, in making their approaches, were greatly annoyed by the brisk fire from the ramparts, and by the continued attacks of the enemy from their camp; but every impediment to the construction of their entrenchments was finally remedied by their indefatigable perseverance. The skilful policy of Idigur had lodged in a wood one half of the Tcheremisses and Nogais, whose hatred of the Russians had brought them to the memorable siege of Kazan. It was previously commanded, that, when they should behold the great banner on the loftiest tower of the city, on the sight of this signal they should instantly sally from their retreat, and fall on the rear of the besiegers, while the Kazanites attacked the front of their powerful foe. These instructions were conceived with judgment and executed with precision. In the audacious fury of this double attack, a disgraceful wound was inflicted on the Russian army, who were driven from their entrenchments, and compelled to abandon their artillery;

artillery; the fame of Ivan must now have been inevitably tarnished by a shameful defeat, had not the nobility of Mouzom, conspicuous for their valour, rallied their broken troops, and led them back with redoubled vigour to the face of the Kazanites. The battle was again renewed with a desperate resolution on both sides. The Kazanites, elated by the first flash of success, stood for a time invincible; but the Russians, burning to wipe away their shame, and animated by the exhortations of their Czar, who shared the dangers of the meanest soldier in this perilous enterprize, finally triumphed over every opposition. Those who retreated to the city were either suffocated in the gateways, or experienced the dire effects of Russian fury. But these splendid advantages did not cool the exertions of the besieged: for three whole weeks, by well concerted and bold sallies, they diffused confusion and slaughter among the ranks of the Russians. Ivan at last checked these impetuous attacks, and likewise confined the Nogais to the thickets, by the improved state of his dispositions.

Protected from their assaults, the Russian army was now compelled to encounter the more terrible attacks of famine. The subsistence of an immense army must be regarded in all ages as one of those charges which

which engage the peculiar attention of a wise commander²⁹. Yet their public distress did not originate from the scantiness of a first supply, but from the imprudence of a general waste. To obviate this fatal evil, the Czar dispatched several parties to scour the country in search of forage, and we can conceive, though not describe, the joy which the Russians must have felt, when their minds were alone filled with the gloomy apprehensions of perishing by famine, to see their comrades return with such great supplies, that an ox was exchanged in the camp for the low value of a few kopecs³⁰.

In this important siege the intrepid genius of the Czar emulated the talents of his best commander, and shewed himself worthy of his future greatness. To the hottest part of the action he was always conducted, by his eagerness of fame and impetuosity of temper; while, in sharing the hardships of the soldiers, and encouraging them by his promptitude and diligence, Ivan had few equals. His hours were often passed in reconnoitring the dif-

²⁹ "Αντι γὰρ τούτων, says the experience of Clearchus, or rather Xenophon in the Anabasis, οὗτε στρατηγοῦ οὐτε ιδιώτου ὄφελος ἔστιν. Ex edit. T. Hutchinson, p. 42.

³⁰ The kopecs may be rated equal to silver pennies, although they have suffered some variations in their form and size, under different names. See the Hist. Russ. Numism. in Le Clerc, Hist. Ancienne de la Russie, tom. ii. p. 529.

ferent parts of the hostile city, in examining the effects of the artillery and machines, in directing the works, and in urging the progress of the ramparts, which were to be raised to the height of the walls, to place the besiegers on a level with the platform of the citadel. On a tower higher than the ramparts, were mounted by his order, ten heavy canons, which incessantly thundered on the city, while from the top of the same building, the Strelitzes fired with such skill on the inhabitants, that scarce a shot was idly wasted.

The moment was now rapidly approaching when the fate of Kazan could no longer be averted. Among the men of science who followed Ivan to this theatre of war, was a Russian whose study of medicine did not disqualify him from pursuing with equal, perhaps superior success, the opposite profession of an engineer; directed by his skill, Ivan watched, with an anxious eye, the perforation of a mine under the foundations of the wall. In the mean time the water was cut off from the city, and the besiegers conveyed along the channels twenty large barrels of powder. The mines were ready on the second, or sixth of October, and the military judgment of the Czar fixed the general assault on the instant they were sprung. During the interval of
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this momentous period, all the roads by which it might be possible for succours to reach the city were guarded by strong patrols; the troops in a slow march proceeded to surround the walls, accompanied by the martial music of tambours and trumpets; and the Tatars took their respective stations, careless of life, and impatient for action.

All these systematic preludes were now concluded, and history has recorded that Sunday was the day appointed for the final reduction of the independence of Kazan. The sanctimonious Czar assisted at the mass, with a mind solely occupied in the unchristian idea of a general extermination. When the deacon had come to that part of the gospel which proclaims that *there shall be one fold, and one shepherd*, words designed by the impious Ivan as a signal for the miners to fire the train, his hearing was instantly assailed by the horrible though gratifying noise of the blown up walls, and his other senses regaled by the air and earth being sensibly affected from the prodigious violence of the explosion. Yet this invention for the destruction of the human species, as new as it was fatal to the Tatars, did not appal their courage. With the most obstinate firmness they defended the breach, with the most gallant despair they defended the ashes of the city. From the

walls of the gardens, the roofs of the houses, they sent forth volleys of missile weapons in every possible direction, kept up a continual play of musquetry and cannon, and discharged on the heads of their enemies boiling-hot liquors, stones, and beams of an enormous size. The Russians, equally desirous of victory, rushed headlong on the breach, clambered up the tottering walls, and made a passage over the battlements; while the Tatars displayed the same undaunted resistance in their houses and streets; for every house was a fortress, every street a new field of battle. They fought like men who revered the memorable exploits of their ancestors, called to mind the greatness of their territories, and resolved, if they must fall, to fall with the glories of an honourable revenge. Wherever the Russians attempted to pass, they found a band of strenuous opponents. The streets, the market-places, were all filled with dead bodies, and such was the extensive picture of their havoc, that it was glaringly visible from the gates to the fields, and even to the distant forests.

The prince Kourbskoi, who was not only a spectator, but also a principal actor in this scene of uniform calamity, relates that the besieged, deprived of all hope, and forced to abandon what they held most dear to the

mercy of the conqueror, left in the palace their wives and children, attired in their richest garments, whose numbers might amount to ten thousand. To this receptacle of female woe the stern Russians soon repaired, their countenances disfigured by blood, sweat, and dust, with threats in their eyes and mouths, and with arms raised for new massacres. But they were not so totally destitute of humanity as to slaughter a band so defenceless, and so submissive.

Yet the victory did not seem decisive until they could ascertain the fate of the khan. They at last discovered him at a distant quarter of the city, surrounded by a handful of loyal subjects, who claimed the happiness of dying with their beloved prince. Unknown and undistinguished from the rest of his followers, he would have received and welcomed the stroke of death, had not the officious zeal of one of his officers revealed his name and disgrace. He was put into chains, but his admission to baptism, under the name of Semen, restored him afterwards to his lost honours, and procured the friendship of the conqueror. A prince far more respectable in all his misfortunes than Sheikh Ali, whose abject servility to the Czar, had led him to witness the struggles of his countrymen, the descendants of the renowned Zingis Khan for

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the last remnants of their public liberties ; nor did he blush at the ignominy of his own situation, when, in the midst of mountains of his slain subjects, he was the first to salute the Czar with the title of conqueror of Kazan". To depress the nobles, and to enlarge the prerogatives of the crown, had ever been the secret policy of Ivan, but not until he had trampled on the ruins of the once formidable Kazan, did he dare to say to them, " God has at last strengthened me against your attacks."

The ³¹ courtiers most conspicuous for their wisdom, and zealous for the interests of the throne, advised their victorious prince to fix his winter residence at Kazan, in order to subdue the neighbouring countries, either by the terrors of his name or arms. But these judicious counsels were superseded by his impatience to embrace a wife, who in his absence had presented him with a pledge of her affection. The insurrection however of several Tatars dependent on Kazan, their refusal to pay the tribute, their murder of his

³¹ Ivan is reported by the ancient historians, to have wept over the desolation of Kazan. From the review of his actions we should be inclined to think it was rather the tear of joy than of sorrow, which appeared on his stern countenance.

³² Levesque, tom. iii. p. 53—58. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 305—308—312.

collectors,

collectors, the loss of a general and battle, and their desolating incursions even to the environs of Nigny-Novgorod and Mourom, disclosed to him the complicated evils resulting from his inattention to their advice; nor were these insults properly revenged until the sixth year after the capture of Kazan, when Ivan Cheremetref, at the head of thirty thousand men, completely punished the savage fierceness of these rebels, and taught even the plundering Baschkirs to tremble at the power of Russia.

The tremendous fate of Kazan soon reached, terrified, and astonished the Tatars of Astrakan; and such was the substantial renown which Ivan purchased from this first and most arduous conquest, that the monarch of a great and powerful nation voluntarily professed himself the vassal of Ivan: and on the death of this new ally, which happened soon afterwards, Emorguei, the successor of the Khan Abdoul, even wished to receive pay from the Czar; so strong appeared his attachment to the Russian interest. Ivan had not forgotten the repeated perfidies of the khans of Kazan. Before this dubious character was therefore admitted to his favour, he dispatched deputies to sound his real disposition, and to receive his oaths. Instead of being treated

with that respect due to their rank and mission, the deputies were robbed by Emorguei.

But this behaviour, however unsuitable to the dignity of the khan, could not be compared with that which daily awaited his subjects. This detestable savage seems to have mounted the throne with the fixed resolution to convert to their ruin that absolute power which had been given him for the benefit of the people. The Nogaian princes also felt his oppression: but their patience could not long tolerate his multiform iniquities; and as they had already acknowledged the yoke of the Czar, they did not conceive their conduct tainted with ingratitude or treason in offering him their whole assistance against the tyrant.

1554. Revenge and compassion now alike stimulated the Czar to listen to the intreaties of the Nogais, and to punish the affront offered to his embassy. An army of thirty thousand men, provided with a powerful ordnance, once more revisited the well-known banks of the Volga, in their progress to vindicate the rights of nations, and to extend the glory of their monarch: never did a Russian army encounter less difficulty than in the conquest of Astrakan. On their approach the capital contained but a handful of armed inhabitants, while the great mass of the people was either scattered

scattered in the adjacent islands, or in the open plains. Emboldened by this easy possession of the capital (for even the few Tatars who had been left there, took flight, and, disgraceful to the humanity of the victors, were butchered like a herd of cattle), they marched with alacrity to the camp of Emorguei, where they experienced no resistance; while the khan, loaded with the curses of his country, eluded the vengeance of the Russians, by a timely flight into Siberia. Thus fell into the hands of Ivan the large and populous city of Astrakan, the position of which is as favourable to the enterprize of trade, as the soil of the neighbouring country³³ is unpropitious to the efforts of agriculture. In very ancient times it is supposed to have been the general staple for the productions of Persia, India, and Arabia³⁴. The magnitude therefore of this victory must not be estimated solely from the advantage of enabling Ivan to secure all his conquests on the Volga, but

³³ Several attempts have been lately made by the wisdom of the Russian government, to colonize the desert of Astrakan. See Pallas's *Voyages* throughout the Southern provinces of the Russian empire, vol. i. p. 97.

³⁴ See Ellis's *Memoir of a Map of the Countries comprehended between the Black Sea and the Caspian*, &c. p. 1, 2. Bell's description of Astrakan, vol. i. chap. iii. p. 36. &c. and Hanway's *Voyage to the Caspian Sea*, vol. i. p. 82. &c.

from

from the opportunities which it gave to his successors of extending a profitable dominion towards the south and the east.

The Russian generals, to secure the allegiance of the Tatars, first nominated Derbic Ali, a prince of their own nation, to hold the sword of justice in the name of the Czar; and to guard his attachment from any capricious fluctuation, two Voyevodes, some infant Boyars, and a detachment of Strelitzes, and Cossacks, were fixed in this subjugated city; while the fierce and vagrant habits so long exercised by the Murzas, in their pastoral, or rather military life, were restrained by the Czar, in the rigid discipline of the court, or in their residence at Astrakan, where their conduct was equally exposed to the eye of suspicion and power. The supine khan of Crim, who had looked on the destruction of the friendly kingdoms of Kazan and Astrakan, without making more than one feeble attempt to hinder their subjection, now with an ignorance agreeable to his former conduct, attacked the Russians flushed with all the ardour of their late success. He entered Russia at the head of
1555. sixty thousand men; but though his numbers were so formidable, their fears reduced them to the weakness of a small band. The engagement

engagement was however protracted for the space of two whole days, when the Russians completely defeated them.

Had the vanquished Tatar hordes been the least practised in the arts of an Italian combination, had their rude minds been impressed with a knowledge of the innumerable advantages originating from the establishment of a union among them, which would have enabled them to act with regularity, and to pursue one command, and one interest at the same time, the Czar would not always have been so successful. Since his undertaking must have met serious impediments to render the event more questionable, and the possession more precarious, from the vicissitude of fortune, the weight of expence, and from all descriptions of persons drawing their swords with spirit and perseverance in support of their national freedom and independence³⁵. The truth of these observations is sufficiently illustrated by the celebrated victory gained over Mamai khan of the Golden Horde, in the year 1380, by the grand prince Demetrius, which may be justly ascribed to that powerful bond of union and

³⁵ As we recede from the dark shades of Tatar oppression, we shall once more begin to use with freedom and safety the works of other historians.

national enthusiasm, so happily excited among the Russian princes by their leader, who, by the simple plan of a confederacy, enabled his countrymen, for the first time, to contend for their independence with a zeal which baffled all the efforts of their tyrants. There can be little doubt therefore, if these associations had been closely followed up by his successors, that the effects of those violent convulsions into which Russia was thrown by the frequent visits of their enslavers, would cease to have been felt before the third and fourth Ivan mounted the throne³⁶.

In the following year³⁷, a new enemy appeared to engage the attention of the Czar. Moved by the pressing solicitations of the Livonians, and relying on their promises of vigorous co-operation, the renowned hero and patriot of Sweden, Gustavus Vasa broke
 1556. the peace, in 1556, which he had sworn with the Czar in 1537, for seventy years; and ratified in 1554. The city of Orecheck had first the honour of resisting the Swedish arms. For twenty days the town was invested;

³⁶ For the details of this famous battle, so honourable to the Russian prince, and which acquired him the surname of *Donsky*, the action taking place on the Don, see Levesque, tom. ii. p. 243, 244.

³⁷ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 59—73. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 315—322.

but

but, at last tired out by their long opposition, they were obliged to raise the siege, and to reëmbark on the first intelligence of the Russians advancing to the succour of the town. Beside the disgrace attendant on a retreat, the Swedes lost one vessel carrying a hundred and fifty, or sixty men, and mounting four pieces of heavy cannon, captured by the Russians, who then directed their hostile steps towards Finland. Before the prince Paletskoi, Namestnik of Novgorod had led these troops into that country, he addressed the following letter to the King of Sweden: "If his majesty be solicitous to redress the wrongs he has done, or to avoid the punishment of them, he must himself repair to the frontiers, and there deliver into the hands of the Czar's generals the advisers of this" war. On this condition only will the past be buried in oblivion. But," continues this audacious writer, "if the king should rashly refuse this last satisfaction, we will then require them in the very bosom of his estates." The proposals were couched in too oriental a style of despotism to obtain the approbation of so high-

²³ Contrary to his usual custom of labouring to expose the savage insensibility of the Russians, Mr. Williams softens this letter, or message of Paletskoi, into expressions of humanity and justice, p. 49.

spirited a prince. The Namestnik therefore, after waiting some time, proceeded to accomplish his threat. His ravages were committed with impunity until he reached Wyburg in Carelia³⁹, when the Swedish army at last appeared to interrupt the progress of his destructive work. The events of this day were injurious to the arms of Sweden. We are ignorant of the causes which occasioned their failure of spirit during this important engagement. But the decisive victory of Paletskoi was attested by such an immense concourse of male and female captives, that their individual value did not exceed a trifling sum of money. The tempting bloom of their youthful slaves more oppressed the Russians than all the various hardships of the war; for their natural austerity of character was totally lost in the unbounded gratification of every sensual desire.

Betrayed by the Poles and Livonians into this unprofitable contest, who were too deeply agitated by their own internal factions to remember their assurances of support, the prudence of Gustavus, at all times no less conspicuous than his valour, extricated him

³⁹ Unsupported by any authority, Oderborn places the Czar instead of his Lieutenant at Vybourg; see Joann. Basil. Vita, lib. ii. p. 282.

from this unexpected embarrassment, by seeking a peace⁴⁰, which was concluded for forty years. From the silence of the Russian historians concerning the conditions of this peace, we may justly suppose, they were as favourable to the Swedes as the campaign had proved unfortunate. The Swedes and Russians were yet strangers to the refinements and accommodation of polished courts. The ministers of Gustavus were not permitted to carry on their negotiations at Moscow, but obliged to treat with the Namestniks of Novgorod. 1557.

Though the war was successfully terminated, yet the resentment of the Czar against its authors arose in exact proportion to the rule and measure of his interest. The dormant, and probably dubious claims, of a tribute of fifty years' standing from the Livonians, were revived by the Czar, that his hostile intentions against their territories might be coloured with some appearance of justice. We shall not presume on the patience of the reader to examine a question which appears to be no less intricate, than altogether uninstruative to us. The design of this work will be answered, if we briefly observe, that the Livonians hesitated not to

⁴⁰ Puffendorf. Hist. de l'Europe, tom. iii. p. 294.

affirm,

affirm, that no such proof of humiliation existed on their registers, and that in consequence of this positive declaration, their grand master Wilhelm Furstenburg deemed it derogatory to the independence of the Livonians to acknowledge this real or supposititious demand⁴¹.

The Czar soon filled Livonia with the forces of Pleskof and Novgorod, the flower of his troops from the principality of Mourom, the Cossacks of the Don, and a strong body of Tatars under the command of their princes: while he himself opened the campaign, and during a month, shared in the fatigues of his warriors. Ivan had prudently fixed on a period for this expedition, when the strength of the Livonians was wasted away by the slow consuming fever of a civil war⁴² between their grand master and the catholic bishop of Riga.

With justice therefore might they tremble at the approaching contest, with a man who was determined to supply every deficiency of his claims by the weight of his arms. Over

⁴¹ Milton, in his brief History of Muscovy, says in positive terms, "he pretended right of inheritance, p. 828."

⁴² It is the just and lively comparison of the celebrated Lord Bacon, "that a civil war indeed is like the heat of a fever, but a foreign war is like the heat of exercise, and serveth to keep the body in health." See his *Essays, Moral, Economical, and Political*, p. 147.

an extent of sixty leagues, in the territories of Riga and Dorpt, the Russians trod with the ravaging steps of barbarian conquerors. Against foes the Livonians, oppressed by luxury and faction, could make but a feeble stand. The events of this war may be described in a very few words; all opposition sunk before the Russians, and in their destructive progress they spared no age, sex, or rank. Livonia was stripped of her riches; and those of her subjects, whom the chance of war had made prisoners, were sold to the Tatars. These brilliant successes were to have been closed by a peace. Already the Livonians had obtained a suspension of arms for six months. The peace was agreed upon, and about to be ratified between the hostile parties, when an unforeseen accident again kindled the flames of war with redoubled fury⁴³.

The city of Narva belonged to the Knights of Livonia, while Ivan-Gorod, founded by his father, and obedient to the Czar, was only separated from the adjoining city by the small river Narova. The Holy Friday has

⁴³ See a copious account of their transactions in "*Historia belli Livonici, quod magnus Moschoviticarum dux contra Livones gessit, per Tilmanum Bredenbachium conscripta*," p. 230, 231, 232. This history is also contained in the valuable collection of Herbestein.

1558. ever been regarded with extraordinary devotion in the Greek calendar. The Russians of Ivan-Gorod, agreeable to the tenets of their religion, maintained a rigid fast until Easter-day. The Livonians for some years had thrown off the papal yoke in favour of the happy reformation, and these unthinking profelytes thought to testify their zeal for the new doctrine, by devoting those hours to intemperance, which their more pious neighbours consecrated to all the severities of mortification; goaded on by the double force of intoxication and zeal, these champions of Luther and of Narva, again forsook those sentiments of peace, in which they had been so lately bound by the loose and imperfect fetters of a truce. In all the phrenzy of rage they mounted the ramparts, and beholding the Russians scattered about the market-place and streets of Ivan-Gorod, in thoughtless security, they treacherously pointed the cannon against them for three days. The conduct of the Russians on this occasion exhibited such a marvellous example of obedience, as perhaps cannot be matched in all the annals of ancient and modern history. The recommencement of hostilities had been forbidden by the last orders of the Czar; and so great was their terror of his punishments, that rather than disobey his commands, they suffered

ferred themselves to be killed by the Germans without offering the smallest resistance. Such amazing resignation is scarcely to be accredited even in the abject character of the Russians.

At last the joyful moments came which brought them succour, and the repeal of that decree which had so long protected the Lutherans of Narva. Alarmed at the first bullets of the enemy, the Germans solicited, and obtained from the imprudence of the Czar, a second truce for a month. But the defeat of four thousand men, who came to them from Revel, in the suspension of hostilities, clouded every prospect of a sure and speedy reinforcement. The renewal of the war now seemed unavoidable; but the truce was not yet expired, when a fire broke out at Narva, in the house of a brewer. The conflagration increased with such fury in the lower, that the inhabitants were soon forced to seek their safety in the higher town. The Russians, could not view this rapid mischief without feeling a strong impulse to profit by their misfortunes. Made dextrous by their eagerness of revenge, they seized all the barks, converted the planks into floating rafts, and when these materials were occupied, they tore the doors from their houses, and in this adventurous manner crossed the river. The

well-timed ardour of the people aroused the lethargy of the troops. Stung with shame at their daring exertions, they hastened with all imaginable speed to follow an example of which they blushed to be only followers. The Voyevodes wished to retain them; but the barrier of command was broken down in this full tide of enthusiasm. By these sudden and vigorous efforts the Russians became masters of the lower town. Instigated by despair, the Livonians then rushed from the higher town, to engage and repel the enterprising foe; but to their utter dismay and astonishment those engines of destruction were turned against them, which had formed the safeguard of their walls. The discipline and activity of the Strelitzes completed their defeat, and the citadel was obliged to capitulate. The troops had permission to leave the town, and the inhabitants to remain in the country⁴⁴. The victors thought themselves amply repaid for their toils by the possession of two hundred and thirty pieces of artillery, which renewed the zeal and means for new conquests⁴⁵.

⁴⁴ Read Joann. Basil. Vita, lib. ii. p. 277: and see truth quite disregarded from the spirit of prejudice.

⁴⁵ "Expugnatâ Nerviâ, Moschoviorum exercitus, arces, pagos, vicos, domos, ac villas undique quindecim milliarum, latitudine circumjacentes, diripit et vastat." Hist. Livonici Belli, p. 233.

They were no less rapid than numerous. Dorpt, though in the prime of her vigour, and guarded by the bravery of a strong body of national and mercenary troops, and by the strength of her fortifications, was reduced to implore the clemency of the victorious Russians. Their defence would have been still more stubborn, if the fever of religious discord had not weakened the inhabitants. The bishop who reigned over the city with a spiritual and temporal sway, delivered himself up to the generals of the Czar, and was not only received at Moscow by its martial ruler with all the honours becoming his former station, but presented by the liberality of Ivan with a city and its dependencies for life, as a compensation for his losses. In the short course of one year, the Russians achieved the conquest of thirty strong places, and returned to their applauding country on the commencement of winter to enjoy their well-earned triumphs.

The Czar now waged a war with Poland. 1559.
The strong town of Felling, and the grand master Furstemberg, (whose treachery in attacking Dorpt after he had solicited a peace with Russia through the mediation of the King of Denmark, provoked his fate,) fell into his hands without any memorable effort ; and the time now seemed inviting to add all Livonia

to the wide circle of his dominions. But
 1560. Gothard-Ketler⁴⁶, the successor of Furstem-
 berg greatly alarmed on Ivan's personal ap-
 pearance in the field, resigned his possessions
 to Sigismond of Poland, from the just per-
 suasion that he was far more capable of de-
 1561. fending them. But when he renounced his
 dangerous right to Livonia, whose critical
 situation so truly called aloud for a more
 weighty protector, his policy procured from
 Poland the rich provinces of Courland and
 Semigallia⁴⁷, under the less honourable though
 1562. more safe title of duke and vassal. But he
 could not render Revel subject to the con-
 trol of Sigismond; that city, with the wide
 extent of territory including the whole of
 Esthonia, was already placed under the pro-
 tection of Sweden; and the bishop of Arens-
 bourg, master of the island of Oesel, had sold
 this petty sovereignty to Frederick the second
 King of Denmark, who bestowed it on Mag-
 nus, his brother, Duke of Holstein.

The aspiring Czar, already undisputed
 master of the greatest part of Livonia, and
 flattered by the hopes of its entire possession,
 could not therefore but view, with a jealous

⁴⁶ Puffendorf, Hist. de l'Europe, tom. ii. p. 148. tom. iii.
 p. 303.

⁴⁷ See Neugebauer, Icones et Historiæ Regum Polono-
 rum, Franc. 1620. p. 129.

and

and angry eye, the pretensions of Sigismund to a country, over which Nature has been so bountiful in almost every valuable branch of commerce, that it still preserves the epithet of the granary of the north ; while his intentions to deprive Sigismund of the rich gift of Ketler, are reported to have been quickened by a personal insult. On the decease of his first wife, the amiable Anastasia, his second choice was fixed on Catherine, the daughter of the Polish king ; but when his firmness of temper clashed with the extravagant demands of Sigismund, ⁴¹ a beautiful mare, magnificently caparisoned, was sent to the Czar in the place of the expected princess. This offensive gift was accompanied with a letter written in the most haughty strain of defiance. We shall not venture an opinion whether this anecdote flows from a spurious or genuine source, but his political wisdom, or private indignation, immediately ratified a treaty of peace with Eric King of Sweden, with a view to direct the whole strength of his empire against this formidable antagonist.

The troops of the Czar soon entered Lithuania, and after the assault and capture of many considerable places, undertook the important siege of Polotsk. Ivan himself 1563.

⁴¹ Williams's Russia, p. 40, 41.

took the command of his troops, while the erroneous judgment of Sigismond expected to have stopped his career by some straggling parties, instead of a well disciplined army. But the loss of Polotsk shewed him how much he was mistaken in the genius and resources of his rival. The city was taken; the commander, his wife, the bishop, and the principal citizens, were made prisoners, and conveyed to Moscow to gratify perhaps the pride or malice of the Czar: while a rich booty amply repaid the labours of the soldiers. Happy for their fame could the authoritative page of history bestow the meed of humanity on their victorious actions. All the monks and all the Jews found in the city, were involved in one massacre.

1564. "The next campaign informed the Czar
1568. how precarious are the gifts of fortune. A decisive victory was gained over one of his armies; another disgraced itself by a cowardly retreat, without trying even the temper of their adversaries. The mean jealousy of the Russians ascribed these shameful losses to the foreign commanders, whom Ivan had invited to improve the military knowledge of his subjects. When he first shook off

* See *Historia Belli Livonici* for a full account of these two campaigns, p. 237, 238, 239.

his domestic servitude, he saw his nation buried in the most profound ignorance and barbarism, proceeding from the continued disorders in the government, and from the oppressive weight of a foreign yoke. The extent of the mischief being thus perceived, there still remained the dangerous task of applying the remedy. To a mind like Ivan's, who desired nothing so much as the organization of his people, we may conceive how greatly he felt mortified and disappointed, when his boyars assiduously laboured to excite the suspicion of the Czar, against characters so much their superiors in science, genius, and virtue. Their discontents however were heard with cold indifference, and their intrigues, when discovered, punished with excessive rigour. Those who had tried their arts with the same want of success, but with more caution, fled from Ivan³⁰ into Poland, filled with most active enmity towards their unoffending country.

³¹ Addicted to passion and cruelty from his natural disposition, the desertion of his nobles still more soured his temper; and after the death of his first wife, whose excellent qua-

³⁰ Milton attributes their desertion to his cruelty, p. 828.

³¹ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 74, 75. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 325—327.

lities had obtained an irresistible dominion over the extravagant passions of her husband, his mature years, for a time, were sullied by plebeian and senatorial blood. But when these ebullitions of his native fierceness were gradually subsiding, he executed a design as new to the Russians as it was extraordinary and artificial. In "a thronged assembly of his nobles, and in a speech full of plausible reasoning, he declared, in 1563, that weary of the society of men, the cares of royalty, and the fatigue of business, he had resolved to pass the remainder of his days in retirement, to watch over the declining state of his health, and to give his whole authority to Idigur, or Semen, the late courageous khan of Kazan, until the tender ages of his sons" should qualify them to discharge the important duties of government. Though all were not

⁵² See *Moscoviæ Descriptio*, auctore Alexandro Guagnini Veronenfi, A.D. 1569, p. 184. in Herbestein's *Rerum Moschov.* This author, who held a post of trust in the reign of Ivan at Vitepsk, a place then under the jurisdiction of Poland and on the borders of Russia, doubtless gathered his information of the Czar's cruelties from his fugitive subjects; and he communicates and dwells on them with such a visible satisfaction, that the unbiassed judge will often find occasion to question his veracity.

⁵³ Guagnini however cannot be praised for the accuracy of his information, when he writes this sentence: "*Eccę habetis, duos filios, meos legitimos hæredes, qui universo imperio nostro præerunt;*" p. 184.

equally

equally affected by the deepest sentiments of sorrow at this singular discourse, the majority of the nation loudly proclaimed their attachment and loyalty, by wishing him to keep the reins of administration, which he had held with such firmness and independence. Yet his was not the dignified, and impressive abdication of a Dioclesian, or Charles the Fifth, who nobly relinquished their pre-eminent ranks, when they were no longer able to manage the public affairs with their former vigour and wisdom; the strength of their constitutions being broken, and the energies of their minds weakened by a premature old age: but rather the wicked retreat of the crafty and cruel Tiberius, in the prime of life, when objects of ambition and the secret pleasure which the heart of man feels of holding the rod of terror and command over his fellow-creatures, dazzle too much the human understanding to be exchanged for the insignificance of a private station. But to carry on the action of this comedy, the subtle tyrant even resigned the name of Czar to his new sovereign, and assumed the subordinate one of grand prince. His advice was however still designedly promised them on great and urgent occasions. But Semen, and all the members of the council, too well knew, that under the mask of this advice was concealed his abso-

lute power, and that their heads would pay the forfeit of their disobedience to his commands.

About twenty-four miles from the capital, Ivan erected a vast mansion, or rather small town, fortified by towers and ramparts of stone³⁴. Here were displayed by imperial wealth, some of the refinements of life, and all its conveniencies. The name of this retreat was Alexandrova Slobada. This was the Capreæ of the Russian Tibetius. To support the dignity of this residence, he reserved for his particular revenue several cities and their dependencies. These selected places were denominated *Opritchina* (exception), and Alexandrova their head; while the numerous satellites who dwelt in this abode of despotism called themselves *Opritchniki*. As the experienced mind of Ivan was not a stranger to the truth of the maxim, that men of low birth and uncultivated minds generally conceive a deep-rooted hatred to that greatness which they cannot attain, these principal instruments of his cruelty were picked from an obscure origin, and peremptorily ordered to have no alliance with illustrious families. Constantly surrounding the person of their

³⁴ "Non amplius viginti-quatuor milliaribus distat." Joann. Basil. Vita, lib. iii. p. 320.

master,

master, they had the valuable opportunity of watching the secret workings of his suspicious heart, and their dexterity omitted not to convert his failings to their own advantage. They alike shed the noblest and the meanest blood of their country, as their avarice was gratified by sharing in the spoils of their victims".

But whilst these scenes of cruelties were performing, Ivan, incapable of wearing only for a time the garb of dissimulation, again publicly mounted that throne, which his acts discovered to all he had never abandoned. Nevertheless, Alexandrova still continued the favourite seat of royalty, and the Opritchniki the ready ministers of every species of oppression.

From the irksome repetition of these crimes, we now turn aside to enter the more honourable field of foreign contest. The "artful policy of Sigismund had frequently prevailed on the Crimean Khan, to attempt a diversion in his favour, but seeing these exertions heap only repeated ruin on his ally, and without

⁵⁵ Guagnini discloses a terrible view of his retirement, p. 184, 185. and we read in the curious though prejudiced pages of Fletcher, that three hundred of the nobility were taken off in one week by the active cruelty of the Opritchniki.

⁵⁶ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 77, 78, 79.

promoting his own advantages, (the most important consideration,) he generously dispensed with his useless services, and contrived to arm against Russia the full force of a more serviceable ally. The name and rank of this new associate was Selim the Second, sultan of Constantinople. The strong ties of interest bound this prince to the cause of Poland; already master of Azof, he wished to seize on Astrakan, to cut a canal of communication between the Don and the Volga to enter to the Caspian sea, which would enable him, from the north of this kingdom, to make Persia the theatre of his military operations.

1569. In this expedition of Astrakan, three thousand janissaries and twenty thousand horse composed the land forces of the commander of the faithful. By his orders fifteen large gallies, containing five thousand janissaries and three thousand artificers, were hastened to Azof. These vessels were also laden with the provisions of the army, which on the union of the Nogais and the Tatars of Crim, might be computed at more than eighty thousand fighting men. The cavalry, after a seasonable repose in the neighbourhood of Azof, proceeded to Astrakan; the infantry pitched their tents near the river Volga, about
sixty

sixty miles from the Don. It¹⁷ was on this spot where the two rivers so nearly approached, that they were to dig a canal sufficiently deep and capacious for the reception of great galleys. The janissaries contributed to facilitate the work. The canal was rapidly forming by their united labours, when fifteen thousand Russians, under the orders of prince Sérebrianoi, abruptly disturbed and defeated the progress of their designs, by spreading destruction among them.

Their cowardice was unknown to the other part of the Turkish army employed at the siege of Astrakan, whose sufferings were destined to be no less deplorable than unexpected. The besieged made a sudden, desperate, and bloody sally; and the Turks were driven back with a considerable loss. In this disaster, they expected to have been relieved by the other detachment of the army, when they received the account of their misfortune.

¹⁷ See Cantemir's History of the Growth and Decay of the Othman Empire, Englished by N. Tindal, Lond. 1734. c. v. book iii. p. 220. Yet this future subject of Russia is ignorant or chooses to forget the hostile and successful interruption of the Russians, when he says in the following page: "That they had scarce finished a third part of the channel when the labourers are so infested with constant rains, cold storms, and want of provisions, that many perishing with sickness and hunger, are forced to desist from their enterprise."

Their

Their subsistence hourly diminished. Instead therefore of the hopes of a conquest, they now only thought of raising the siege. From this prudent intention they were however unfortunately diverted by the persuasions of the Tatars to throw up entrenchments, and to rely on them for an abundant stock of provisions.

But a series of misfortunes followed their adherence to this counsel. The Tatars were met after their departure by the Russians, who engaged and almost cut the whole of them to pieces. After passing eight days of distressing expectation for these supplies, they learnt the actual condition of the Tatars; destitute of all resources, in a moment of despair the musklemen set fire to their entrenchments. The Tatars were their guides in their retreat. But, fearful of becoming their slaves, they ensnared them into deserts, boundless and horrible. Here famine and disease destroyed their men and horses. After enduring these hardships for a month, they arrived at the port of Azof, and their tattered garments, wan countenances, and thinned numbers, fully bespoke their past sufferings, and present wretchedness. But these struggles did not terminate their misery; they embarked, and even the elements warred against them. A
furious

furious tempest unexpectedly arose and swallowed up the greatest part of the vessels and of their living burthen. Seven thousand men could scarcely be collected from the relics of this flourishing army, to present themselves before the disappointed sultan⁵⁸. But these advantages were effaced by his barbarities at Novgorod, the cradle of his empire. If the history of the times may be accredited, this city fell by the execrable reports of the Opritchniki.

But in commiserating her fate, we must not fail to remember that her innocence was tainted with the foul breath of sedition. The "allegiance of her archbishop was broken by criminal correspondence with Sigismund Augustus, and a long list of eminent citizens were doubtless warped to the views of their disloyal primate. Yet Novgorod was too severely chastened by the rage of Ivan for nourishing these traitors in her bosom. Under the firm persuasion that Sigismund had corrupted the fidelity of his subjects, he cruelly resolved to defeat for ever the projects of

⁵⁸ Both Oderborn and Réutenfelds relate the fatal issue of this expedition. But the narrative of one is confused, the other uncircumstantial. See Joann. Basil Vita, lib. ii. p. 272. De Rebus Moschoviticis, lib. i. cap. xii. p. 67, 68.

⁵⁹ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 80, 81. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 327, 328.

his rival, by the total ruin of a city, so venerable from her antiquity, and once so great from the extent of her commerce. By his orders the sword of civil slaughter was first unsheathed by a band of soldiers, or rather ruffians, who advanced a few days before him, and starting from their ambushes like beasts of prey, dyed the road with the blood of innocent and defenceless passengers. Thus all communication between Novgorod and Moscow was broken off by these assassins, and as they were too accomplished in the trade of murder to suffer the escape of any one, the Novgorodians saw not the clouds which produced the storm, until they burst at once on their heads. After these terrific preludes, the tyrant himself departed from Alexandrova Sloboda with the eldest of his sons, and his guards, the savage Opritchniki. A corps of Tatars and some infantry preceded his march: they shed a torrent of blood; and the market towns and villages proclaimed, in flames, the approach of their ferocious monarch.

1570.

In rude ages and under the reign of superstition, how often alas! has the altar of religion and revenge been worshipped by the same votary. Ivan, impatient to taste of human blood on his arrival at Novgorod, did not begin his work of carnage until mass was heard

heard in the church of Saint Sophia⁶⁰. The archbishop advanced to meet him with the cross in his hands.

"Traitor," exclaimed the Czar in all the language of ungoverned passion, "It is not the cross which supports your hands, but a weapon which you have wielded against me and my authority. To Sigismund, my enemy, you have conspired to deliver this city; you who style yourself the shepherd and director of the people; but the name of wolf and robber would be more suitable to your actions." When this speech of foul reproach was finished, he commanded the terrified archbishop to repair to the cathedral for the celebration of mass.

After the service he partook of a sumptuous entertainment, at the archiepiscopal palace. The angry passions of his soul were at first veiled under a gloomy silence in which the conscious Novgorodians might have anticipated all the horrors of their fate; while in the midst of this mournful banquet the archbishop was arrested and inclosed for ever in a monastery⁶¹, and his vassals of vengeance set

⁶⁰ Sub prætextu religionis conservandæ, he came to Novgorod. Guagnini, p. 163.

⁶¹ Oderborn, lib. ii. p. 285. relates, that after the archbishop was carried round the city by the Czar's commands,

set loose in the terrified city. But the most horrible part of the tragedy was performed by the Czar himself, if we may trust the assertions of a contemporary writer. Pent up in an inclosure, the magistrates and principal inhabitants awaited, in all the anguish of despair, the sentence of their implacable tyrant. The Czar and his son entered on horseback, and dealt destruction around them; those who did not immediately perish by the wounds given them from their spears, were for the most part trampled to death by the hoofs of their chargers; but that none of these sufferers might survive to record his inhuman deeds, Ivan summoned to his aid the Opritchniki, who, fresh, vigorous, and persevering, soon ended the massacre uncompleted by him and his son⁶². He then ordered the ice of the Volkhof, on which Novgorod stands, to be broken, and some hun-

demum jussit jugulari. This is by no means improbable; but this writer greatly fails in gaining our confidence, from his seeking every occasion to blacken the character of Ivan.

⁶² *Donec uterque ambelans defatigaretur.* Guagnini, p. 191, 192. Mark the horrible exactness of the tyrant's orders; "Irruite in hos perfidos, secate, dissecate, trucidate, neminemque vivum relinquitte." Some writers have been inclined to disbelieve this account of Guagnini; but the tragical fate of the citizens of Novgorod is unhappily confirmed by too many authentic testimonies, to be regarded as a detestable fiction.

dreds

dreds⁶³ of citizens to be thrown headlong into their watery grave.

After five weeks' slaughter in which five-and-twenty thousand men⁶⁴ had fell beneath his oppression, (strange to relate!) the Czar began to feel the returning sentiments of humanity. We know not which most to condemn in this affair, the patience of the victims, or the execrable conduct of Ivan. Novgorod never again recovered her former splendour, but sunk into the insignificance of an obscure village, after the thunders of Ivan had been hurled against her peace, commerce, and population.

With a heart still unsatiated by bloodshed, the despot reached and passed the cities of Pleskof and Tver, in his return to Moscow. The timely submission of the first produced by the milder sentence of a general confiscation, and the execution only of a few monks, who had enticed the people to the standard of rebellion. Tver however was the transcript of Novgorod in her calamities⁶⁵.

⁶³ Guagnini, p. 191. "Deinde aliquot centena hominum flumen gelu concretum, aquis immerfi et obruti."

⁶⁴ Some writers have even magnified the amount to thirty thousand; but the most carnivorous appetite may be satisfied, *we should think*, with five-and-twenty thousand.

⁶⁵ Guagnini follows the Czar in his route of destruction; and it is not his fault, if we do not observe his despicable and undistinguishing cruelties; p. 190.

On his return to Moscow⁶⁶, he again committed crimes which cannot be expiated on without shocking the feelings of a refined age, crimes which equal, if not exceed in variety and enormity⁶⁷, those of a Domitian, Caligula, or Commodus. The Swedes then became once more the foes of Russia. While instigated

⁶⁶ We will leave the reader to guess at the variety and extent of his cruelties from the perusal of this sentence: "*Trecenti nobiles Moschoviae antiquissimarum et nobilissimarum familiarum homines,*" after undergoing every torture which ingenious barbarity could devise, were all delivered at the same time by the tyrant's orders into the butchering hands of the Opritchniki. See Guagnini, p. 201.

⁶⁷ Without believing that he ordered men and women to be tied to spits and roasted alive; see a brief Historical Relation of the Empire of Russia, Lond. 1654, p. 4.; I shall transcribe a passage from Guagnini of his brutal and licentious nature, which however cannot be faithfully translated, without offending the modesty of female ears. Whenever he met a lady, the conduct of whose husband was displeasing to him, "*tunc eam ex curru descendere, et collo tenus pudenda detergere jubet, et tamdiu stare cogitur, donec omnes satellites, equites, aulici, et ipse magnus dux præteriant,*" p. 189. If our learned Elizabeth had perused this disgusting passage, the patient submission of the Russians would have shewn her, that her offer was useless of an asylum to him and his family, in case he should be compelled to descend from the throne by the strong arm of rebellion, although he might be pleased to ask for one, "*si quid adversi sibi acciderit.*" See Camdeni Annales Eliz. edit. Hearn, Lond. 1718, vol. ii. p. 399. We shall presume to think, that the taste and curiosity of the reader may be gratified in seeing the nature and extent of the shelter promised by the generous policy of Elizabeth, should his subjects dare to think and act like men.

figated by his disappointed though unsubdued
foe the King of Poland", the Crimean Ta-
tars

Cotton MS. Nero, b. xi. p. 341.

May, 1570.

" *The copie of the Queen's Majestie's Letter to the Emperour of
Russia.*

" Elizabeth, by the Grace of God, Queen of England, Fraunce, and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c. To the most mightie and puissant Prince our dear Brother, Great Lord Emperour, and Great Duke Ivan Basily of all Russia, Voldameria, Muscovia, Novogorodia, Emperour of Casantia, Emperour of Astracantia, Lord of Plefcovia, Great Duke of Smoleva, Tueria, Ugoria, Perima, Vatia, Bolgaria, and manie other Landes; Lord and Great Duke of Novogrodia in the lowe countries, Arningovia, Renfbintia, Poloscia, Roscovia, Jaroslavvia, of the White Lake Ondorfna, Obdorfia, Condnitia, and the countries of the north partes, and of all Siberia, Lande Commander and Lord of the inheritance of Livonia, and manie other countries of the south, north, east, and west, belonging to his Highnes, his heirs and successeurs; greetinge, healthe, and peace in our Lord Iesus Christ.

" Where we have by other our lettres delivered to your Highnes' ambassadour, the noble person Andrew Gregoriwicke Saviena, made aunswere to the greatest part of such messages and lettres as the said ambassadour declared and brought to us, we have thought good in some secreite manner, to send your Highnes, for a manifest and certaine token of our good will to your Highnes' estate and suertye, this our secrett lettre, whereunto none are privie besides ourself but our most secreite councell, wee do so regard the suertie of you the Emperour and Great Duke, as we offer that yf at anie time it so mishappe that your L--our brother Emperour and Great Duke bee by anie casuall chaunce either of secreite conspiracie or outward hostillitie driven to
change

" Puffendorf, Hist. de l'Europe, tom. iii. p. 362.

tars hazarded an incursion into Ruffia. We can only suppose, that from a real or affected contempt,

change your countries, and shall like to repaire into our kingdome and dominions, with the noble Empress your wife, and your dear children the princes, wee shall with such honours and curtesies receive and intreate your Highnes and them as shall become so great a prince;

“ And shall earnestlie endeavour to make all thinges fall out accordinge to your Majestie’s desire, to the free and quiett breedinge of your Highnes’ life, with all those whom you shall bring with you: And that it maie be lawful for you the Emperour and Great Duke to use your Christian Religion in such sorte as it shall like you: for neither meane we to attempt anie thinge to offend either your Majestie or anie of your people, nor intermeddle anie waies with your Highnes’ faith and religion, nor yet to severre your Highnes’ household from you, or to suffer anie of yours to be taken from you by violence.

341 b. “ Besides wee shall appointe you the Emperour and Great Duke a place in our kingdome fitt upon your own charges, as longe as ye shall like to remain with us.

“ And yf it shall seeme good unto you the Emperour and Great Duke to depart from our countries, wee shall suffer you, with all yours, quietlie to depart either into your empire of Muscovia, or else whither it shall best like you to passe through our dominions and countries: neither shall we anie wise lett or staie you, but with all offices and curtesies let you (our deare brother Emperour and Great Duke) passe into your countrie or elsewhere at your pleasure.

“ This wee promise by virtue of these our lettres, and by the word of a Christian Prince. In witnes whereof, and for the further testification of this our lettre, wee Queen Elizabeth doe subscribe this with our owne hand, in the presence of these our nobles and counsellors; Nicholas Beacon, Knt. Great Chauncellor of our realme of England; William Lord Parr; Lord Marques of Northampton, Knight of our Order

contempt, such a temper as Ivan suffered these barbarians to approach his capital, without once attempting to chastise their presumption. But whatever cause may be ascribed for this inactivity, we can feel no hesitation in pronouncing our belief of the sincerity of his grief for its fatal consequences. Their firebrands¹⁵⁷¹ committed the suburbs to flames, and a furious wind so far spread the fatal mischief, that it reached to the powder magazine, the explosion of which destroyed a great

der of the Garter; Henrie Earl of Arundell, Knight of our said Order; Frauncis Lord Russell, Earle of our said Order; Robert Dudley, Lord of Denbigh, Earl of Leicester, Master of our Horse, and Knight of the same Order; Edward Lord Cleaton and Say, Lord Admirall of England, and Knight of our said Order; William Lord Haward of Effeingham; Frauncis Knolles, Knight, Treserour of our howse; James Croft, Knight, Comptroller of our said house; William Cicill, Knight, our Principall Secretarie; and have also thereto hanged our privie Seale, promisinge that wee against our common enemies shall, with one accord, fight with our common forces, and doe everie and singular things mentioned in this writing, as longe as God shall lend us life, and that by the word and faith of a Prince. Given at our Honour of Hampton Court, the xviiith day of the moneth of Maie, in the xiith yere of our reigne, and in the yere of our Lord one thousand five hundred three score and tenne."

⁶⁹ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 93. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 335.—Thuanus says in his *Historia sui temporis*, lib. xlviii. that the whole was almost destroyed, "exceptâ arce principis quæ, lapide structa, et ampli oppidi instar, muris cingebatur."

number

number of edifices. The flames did not cease until the most considerable part of the city was reduced into ashes. And in this memorable conflagration of the metropolis, it is affirmed, that above an hundred thousand inhabitants either perished by the fire or by the sword of the Tatars⁷⁰.

⁷¹ Moscow however arose from her ruins with additional splendour, under the direction of foreign architects, which the liberality of Ivan had invited to his kingdom; but it was a poor compensation for the destruction of his subjects and capital, to cut off the ears, noses, and lips of the most distinguished in the embassy which the khan had sent to demand a tribute, and to dismiss them in that mutilated condition to their master, with the charge that they should give him a hatchet for the tribute which he so presumptuously demanded. But

⁷⁰ Yet our countryman Fletcher exceeds all bounds of moderation, when he says *eight hundred thousand* were destroyed, notwithstanding the circumference of Moscow was thirty, and according to some writers even upwards of fifty English miles in circumference.

⁷¹ So extensive already was the commercial intercourse between Russia and England, that the latter lost by the conflagration of Moscow above one hundred thousand roubles. The Czar promised them to the whole amount; but, like many other sovereigns, he was not very tenacious of his word when it interfered with his interest. See Anderson's *Historical and Chronological Deduction of the Origin of Commerce*, vol. ii. p. 137.

the

the Czar most trembled perhaps when he affected to disregard every sensation of fear. The enraged khan entered Russia, and from the strength of his army expected to have dragged this offender from his throne, who disgraced his rank and himself by a precipitate flight to Novgorod, and appointing Mikhail Vorotinski his guardian and avenger. At the head of a numerous army this prince met and engaged the khan. To abbreviate the uniform tale of slaughter, we shall observe, that his revenge for the late horrible fate of his country was in some degree obtained by the rout of their army, the death of one of the sons of the khan, the capture of the other, and the possession of their tents, baggage, and principal standard.

A peace with the Tatars, and a truce of three years with Poland, quieted, for a time, the mind of Ivan, and enabled him to carry on a doubtful and bloody war with Sweden with more force and activity, until a fresh combatant started up to molest his declining years. The ambitious projects of his old rival Sigismund, in the following year after this cessation of hostilities, were terminated in the grave. But they were ripened into solid success, by the activity and perseverance of
the

1572.

the renowned Stephen Battori⁷². This prince, no less gallant than politic, was tempted to point his strength at Russia, from the desire of annexing Livonia to his crown, and from the persuasions of Magnus duke of Holstein, who at first had received from Ivan the vain title of king of Livonia, of kinsman from marriage, and afterwards the name of traitor, on his refusal to admit him into the town of Kokenhausen.

1578.

1579.

⁷³ Before he indulged in a spirit of rapine and bloodshed, he demanded from Ivan the restitution of his conquests in Lithuania and in Livonia. The refusal of the Czar was accompanied with an equally preposterous claim of Courland. From a wish, perhaps of exciting the irritable temper of the Czar, to some act of violence⁷⁴, which should furnish him with the fairest pretence of commencing his ravages in Russia, he dispatched another

⁷² The election of the ungrateful duke of Angou cannot be called a reign, whose flight from Cracow to receive the crown of France, is called by that severe judge of kings, Bayle, "*la chose du monde la plus honteuse.*" See his *Dictionnaire Historique & Critique*, Article Henri III.

⁷³ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 342.

⁷⁴ If we may believe the proclamation of Battori, his ambassadors were robbed of their most precious valuables, and their horses cut up in their sight by the commands of the savage and passionate Czar. See *Edictum Regis ad Milites de Bello in M. Moscoviz Ducem suscepto*. Col. 1580.

deputy

deputy to Ivan with fresh though perhaps not more reasonable proposals. A prison, instead of an audience, was the result of his visit. All hopes of accommodation being done away by this act, the king of Poland prepared to encounter the formidable Ivan ; and his first steps were successfully taken. He not only retook Polotsk, the possession of which had been so much coveted by the Czar, but dextrously formed a league with the king of Sweden, in which they stipulated to attack separately their common enemy, and to preserve the acquisitions which they expected to obtain from their powerful efforts⁷⁵. The 1580.
 Swedes discomfited the troops of the Czar, and seized with a strong hand Kexholm, in Carelia, and several other towns in Esthonia. The arms of Battori were equally terrible and successful. Such an uninterrupted train of good fortune alarmed Ivan, and we discern at once the greatness of his fears, by the extraordinary measures he took to relieve them. This zealous advocate for the Greek religion, this violent foe to the Catholic church, con- 1581.
 descended to dispatch a special messenger to Pope Gregory XIII. who, in the name of his submissive master, complained of the enterprizes of the Pole, and conjured the pontiff

⁷⁵ Bussendorf, Hist. de l'Europe, tom. iii. p. 389.

to instil into the mind of that prince a more genuine love for the doctrines of Christianity⁷⁶. What an undesigned compliment does the haughty Czar of Russia pay the character of his enemy by such a request. In the eyes of posterity this confession forms the noblest panegyric on the character of Stephen. The aspiring successors of St. Peter had always deeply regretted that the vast empire of Russia should be under another spiritual jurisdiction. The subtle Gregory was too conversant in the maxims of his predecessors, to neglect for a moment so great an object of papal attention. To forward his selfish aims, he sent the Jesuit Possevin to the Czar, a priest possessing every requisite for such a mission. This delegate of Rome was commissioned to negotiate a peace between the two contending courts, and chiefly to try every artifice of intrigue in order to introduce the Latin rituals in Russia. But in this last attempt the stubborn temper of the people blasted the growing hopes of the holy see⁷⁷. Possevin first

⁷⁶ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 344.

⁷⁷ "Ivan the terrible," says Mr. Tooke in a note of his History of Russia, vol. i. p. 382. "gave the papal ambassador, who had been talking to him a great deal in favour of his submission to the see of Rome, for answer: 'I am Ivan, Czar of Russia, and king of several kingdoms, which God has given me through my ancestors, and I cannot comprehend

first directed his steps to the king of Poland ; but this prince wisely refused to hearken to all overtures of accommodation, unless the Czar consented to cede the whole of Livonia, several towns of Russia, and to reimburse him for the expences of the war.

⁷⁸ With these degrading propositions, the Jesuit departed for Staritsa, where Ivan then held his court. In his progress to this place, the ambassador of Gregory was treated with extraordinary honours. An escort of infant boyars, under the command of a nobleman of the first rank, received him on the frontier, accompanied by a *Pristaf*: the name of this officer is derived from his employment of attending the ambassadors, supplying their table, and superintending their household. In the train of this servant of the court, followed several horses richly caparisoned for the Jesuit and his principal attendants. Sixty domestics of the royal palace were ordered to serve him : a salute of artillery greeted his arrival at Novgorod and Smolensk ; and the bishops were

hend how any mortal can assume the right to dispose of my empire and kingdoms that belong to others.' It would have profited much, in these days, the realm and family of other princes, if they had copied the *political dulness* of this barbarian."

⁷⁸ Antonii Possevini Moscovia, Antw. 1589, p. 32, 33, 34, 35.

charged

charged to treat him with every mark of respect during his stay in their cities. On his approach to Staritsa, he passed through a long line of the Strelitzes, whose silent order and splendid clothing⁷⁹ revealed the discipline and magnificence of their master. In the court of the palace, and in the apartments, were ranged, according to their respective degrees, the Boyars and Dvorian, attired in rich habits of gold.

A nobleman of the first distinction, and a secretary of state, ushered him even to the centre of the grand stair-case. He then beheld the Czar and his son; both of them presented their hands to him, and Ivan even graciously laid aside the dignity of his station, and conferred on him the honour of an invitation to the royal table. But the hopes of a peace, to promote which the jesuit had alone been honoured with such distinguished notice, slowly thrived under his auspices, until the Swedes, led on by their accomplished general, Pontus de la Gardie, had carried by assault the city of Narva, where he put to the sword seven thousand Russians, and planted his

⁷⁹ We read in the first volume of Hackluyt's *Voyages*, p. 250. that the armour and accoutrements of the meanest soldier were gilded or else adorned with silk: and there is no reason to suppose there was any diminution of these ornaments on this important occasion.

standard on the walls of Ivan-Gorod and Vittenstein⁸⁰, and carried his ravages even to the gates of Novgorod⁸¹. Jealous of such superior advantages, and fearful that his successful confederate would aim at still higher exploits, Battori prudently waved some of his most rigorous conditions, and signed, in the commencement of the year one thousand five hundred and eighty-two, a peace with Russia, by which he obtained the productive territory of Livonia, while he consented to recede from his former demands of indemnification, and to restore the places in Russia which his arms had acquired. About the same time the Crimean Khan obtained his safety by a peace with Russia; while the following year, the Swedish prince listened to the voice of reason, and concluded a truce with Ivan for three years, after the ardour of his troops had languished at the siege of Orecheck, and the danger hourly increased of an open rupture with Poland.

1582.

But his enemies would never perhaps have perceived these traits of weakness in the character of Ivan, had not his intrepid spirit been utterly subdued by the loss of public hap-

⁸⁰ Puffendorf, Hist. de l'Europe, tom. iii. p. 390, 391; tom. ii. p. 148.

⁸¹ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 109, 110—114. See also Rerum post captam Polociam contra Moschum gestarum Narratio.

R

pinefs,

piness, and private repose. Under the influence of a passion which equally on the slightest or greatest provocation, leaves men neither masters of their reason nor actions, this wretched prince gave the death-blow to his son, whose personal merit is said to have been deserving of the affections and esteem of the people. The fatal effect of this instance of anger has been so variously related, that in the confusion of opposite accounts it is difficult to discover the truth.

When old age, it was conceived, had debilitated the ruling arm of Ivan, and fortune continued favourable to a confederacy maintained by courage and ability, some of the principal boyars excited the people to send a deputation to the Czar with the ungracious petition that his son might be placed at the head of the army. Exasperated at their request, the chief abettors of it were punished with death, and on the next day the indignant monarch appeared without his guards, and before the people divested himself of his crown and robe. "Present this robe," exclaimed the Czar, in an impressive, though perhaps too ostentatious a tone of dignity, "to one who is my superior in attention to the public affairs, to whose commands you will pay a more prompt and cheerful obedience. In me you behold the conqueror of Livonia,

Livonia, Kazan, Astrakan, and of the Turks. I have dedicated my whole life to promote the glory and to assert the independence of my kingdom; and now you with my resignation as an acceptable testimony of your gratitude and attachment for my extraordinary services." During this address the people melted into tears and stood in a respectful silence waiting the conclusion of this strange occurrence. The courtiers wisely answered this harangue with expressions of loyalty and zeal, and the applauding shouts of the people proved to him that in his old age he was not the object of their hatred or contempt. With contrite hearts and bended knees his subjects implored him to assume once more his regal ornaments. "I shall only take them up," he sternly replied, "to punish the authors of this foul conspiracy."—Then turning to his son with a look that painted all the rising anger of his soul, "Art thou," said he, "that abandoned wretch who wouldst invite my faithful people to rebellion? Is it thou, who wouldst destroy a father to occupy his throne? But such unparalleled treachery shall not go unrewarded; and since thy unnatural heart has ceased to remember the ties of allegiance and love, in punishing thy offence, I shall lay aside the tenderness of the parent, and substitute in its place the rigid equity of the so-

vereign against the traitor of his country. Trust me, in thy sentence shall be conveyed a lasting instruction for sons to respect their fathers, when they labour under heavy misfortunes." The royal Ivan, deeply wounded at these unjustifiable reproaches, threw himself at his father's feet to vindicate his innocence. In that fatal moment the Czar, deprived of his reason by a sudden burst of passion, gave him a blow on his head, of which the young prince only lingered a few days. In this way does Oderborn relate this fatal transaction⁸².

⁸³ But if we consult another, and probably more authentic writer, the Jesuit Possevin, he will inform us that the death of that unfortunate prince must be ascribed to a very different cause. Among a people so deeply tinged with the austerity of monastic ideas as the Russians of these times, and so far removed from a state of high civilization, we cannot expect to find their harsh natures indulgent to the smallest imperfections of the

⁸² "Quoniam igitur tu in patre principem Moschorum non agnoscis, ego quoque principem me magis quam patrem indicabo, statuatque in te exemplo, ne quis posthac infelicibus miseriis parentum illudat." Joann. Basil. Vita, lib. iii. p. 310. The reader will perceive we have taken some slight liberties with this speech. See also Williams's Russia, p. 43, 44; and Lacombe, p. 51, 52.

⁸³ Ant. Possev. Moscov. p. 28, 29.

female sex. It was the custom of ladies of high rank to wear three robes, more or less weighty in proportion to the rigour or mildness of the season; while to be seen in one only, was considered as an infringement on the rules of decency, as the under garment either from its shape or lightness, gave ample scope for the senses to be inflamed with the ardour of desire. It happened that the wife of the Czarovitz, advanced in her pregnancy, and compelled to transgress the laws of female delicacy, from her burthensome situation, was surprised by the Czar in her apartment, lying on a bench attired only in a single garment. In rising to extenuate her offence, he struck her with a staff which he always carried in his hand. The shrill outcries of the princess were heard by the Czarovitz. He flew to her relief; and in this scene of reproach and contention the furious father gave him a blow on the head which proved mortal. Thus perished a prince over whose untimely bier, historians, in pity to his misfortunes, have profusely scattered the roses of every virtue without recollecting that the man who could act so cruel a part in the butcheries of Novgorod, could never be praised by impartial judges for a superfluous display of humanity or justice.

But though the cause of his death is so differently assigned by writers, yet all agree that the crime went not unpunished. Inconsolable for the death of his murdered son, his courtiers could with difficulty prevail on Ivan to accept of nourishment; and for several days his tribulation of mind did not permit him to change his dress. His ⁸⁴ nights were tormented by the stings of a guilty conscience⁸⁵, and in the paroxysms of despair he longed to practise the humble functions of a monk. The reduced coffers of the patriarchs of Constantinople and Alexandria⁸⁶ were enriched from his guilt; and such was the deep impression of his grief, that during the short remainder of his days he could never hear the name of his beloved son without the tears of repentance trickling down his aged cheeks.

1584. In the following year death relieved him from the pains of his mind and body, on the nine-

⁸⁴ Ant. Possev. Moscov. p. 31.

⁸⁵ Yet if we may place confidence in the author of a Brief Historical Relation of the Empire of Russia, his penitence did not contribute to stop the current of his usual cruelty: for behind his pillow was found a note which sentenced seventeen persons to death, p. 4.

⁸⁶ Jacobus Reutenfelds specifies the amount of his repentant donation; "septuaginta septem aureorum nummum millia ad patriarchas Constantinopolitanum et Alexandrianum," &c. De Rebus Moscov. l. i. cap. xii. p. 66.

teenth

teenth of March, after a reign of fifty years, and in the fifty-fourth of his life".

The character of this prince has been variously transmitted to us by men inimical to tyranny, schooled in calumny, and skilful in adulation. We may therefore strike out some degree of truth by the confrontation of their different accounts. He was gifted, in a surprising degree, with that vigour of mind and body which qualify men for great and arduous undertakings. When we call to remembrance the greatness, the variety, and success of his measures, he possesses strong claims to the appellation of a great mind. When we consider his monstrous tyranny, his name can never be recorded as a bright example of moderation, clemency, and justice. We entertain not a wish to soften the black shades of his crimes with the varnish of partiality: but the truth of history must observe, that his horrible vices seem more to be the effects of passion than of a depraved growth of nature: in his features of extortion, violence, cruelty, and dissimulation, a discerning eye will perceive a close resemblance with Louis XI. of France"; in sound judgment, untutored

⁸⁷ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 352.

⁸⁸ In Hackluyt's *Voyages*, vol. i. p. 457. we read that Elizabeth greatly strengthened her interest with Ivan by

untutored force of intellect, and arbitrary maxims of administration, he might be paralleled with William the Conqueror. The incidents of his reign contributed to represent his defects (which was not necessary) in a more striking light. Impelled to cruelties by seeing the whole machine of his government in danger of being torn into pieces by his rebellious subjects, he sent forth, to persecute and to destroy, that abhorred legion of informers, the Opritchniki; while the remembrance of what he had endured in his childhood, from the tyrannical acts of the boyars, who were at that time bound to assist him by every tie of fidelity and honour, did not serve to mitigate his hatred and suspicion of them, when his youthful and adventurous courage burst and revenged the fetters of domestic oppression.

There were some traits in his character so low and at the same time so atrocious, that

sending into his dominions Dr. Jacob, a physician of great skill. We are ignorant whether Ivan's apprehensions of death and the policy of this son of Æsculapius enabled him to exercise that domineering sway, and to obtain those valuable donations from his guilty fears, as the artful physician Jacques Costier did from the tyrant Louis; and which is so admirably told by that pleasing and faithful historian Comines. See his *Memoirs*, à Lyon, 1559, liv. vi. p. 177.

they

they cannot ever be numbered in the memorable crimes of an intrepid tyrant. Not content with abusing the rights of men in his elevated rank of judge, he could meanly descend to become the executioner of his victims⁸⁹; he could endow the monasteries, and at the same time rob the widow and orphan of their scanty pittance; he could prostrate himself before the shrine of some reputed saint, and at the next moment sanction the performance of the most unwarrantable murder; while the inner recesses of his palace were polluted with such infamous crimes and brutish pleasures⁹⁰, as cannot be faithfully delineated without betraying a manifest indecorum of character.

Ignorant of letters, and unacquainted with science, his noble attempts to infuse a tincture of learning into the uninformed minds of his countrymen call for our warmest tribute of praise. It may appear extraordinary that a

⁸⁹ It is with great justice that Chantreau calls him "le plus ingénieux bourreau qui se soit assis sur le trône des Russes." See *Voyage Philosophique, Politique, et Littéraire, fait en Russie, pendant les années 1738 et 1739; à Hambourg 1794*, tom. i. p. 126.

⁹⁰ If the reader wishes to be introduced into the royal chamber, he cannot choose a better master of the ceremonies than Guagnini, or Levesque, both of whom will draw his attention to such sights as may terrify, amaze, and confound him. *Moscoviæ Descriptio*, p. 183—206. *Hist. de Russie*, tom. iii. p. 170—182.

prince so stern and haughty in his deportment, so severe and sullen in his manner, so jealous, tyrannical, and vindictive, should possess even to the last that best reward of a virtuous prince, the esteem and affections of his people. But the splendour of his conquests and personal valour attracted the vulgar eye, and perhaps it is no deviation from truth to say, that the Russians were so thoroughly moulded to every species of servitude, that their degenerate natures were alike willing to extol their prince, when he either appeared as the father or the scourge of his country.

When history is constrained to follow the victorious career of a prince whose actions, in most respects, proclaim him uncivilized, she treads in a rugged path, and her vesture is bloody. To observe therefore the first dawnings of science and literature which were to shine with such glory on the revolutions of Peter the Great, and the second Catharine, may turn the attention of the reader from those sanguinary events so essentially connected with Russian history, and present to his view a spectacle not altogether undeserving of his notice.

The

The first grand object in the miscellaneous transactions of this reign is, the conquest of Siberia⁹¹. By the accession of this immense province, first made known to Russia by private opulence⁹², she obtained an extent of territory never before acquired by any other nation. But this new edifice of Russian power was not completed during the life of Ivan; it was reserved for his successors to raise it to its present shape of greatness.

To enumerate some of the principal productions of this Peru of Russia, will be no great aberration from the design of this work. This country, which boasts of rich furs now refused⁹³ to the rest of the earth, shuts up in its icy entrails the dead bodies of elephants, whose teeth alone form a valuable

⁹¹ We cannot call the straggling expedition of the Russians against the barbarous inhabitants of Igur, under the reign of Ivan III., the discovery or conquest of Siberia; as scarcely any memory of it, much less advantage, prevailed in the weak and factious reign of his successor.

⁹² For the historical part, see Levesque, tom. iii. p. 114—150. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 401—409. and Coxe's Russian Discoveries, p. 275—297.

⁹³ See Nov. Comment. Academ. Petrop. tom. v. p. 338. *Animalium quorundam quadrup. descrip. auctore Jo. Georg. Gmelin, Buffon Hist. Naturelle, Par. 1765. p. 309—313. and Pennant's Hist. of Quadrupeds, 3d edit. vol. ii. p. 43—49, for the figure, description, and history, of the sable, now principally to be found in the eastern parts of Siberia, whose beautiful skin is so useful and ornamental an appendage to the dress of a Russian gentleman.*

branch

branch of trade. Possessing many gold and silver mines, it likewise abounds in other valuable metals. Content with these precious stones, it does not envy the brilliant congelations of the East; and were the hand of nature ⁹⁴ less bounteous, this allotted residence of exiles would still be sufficiently rich by the fertility of its southern lands, by the labours of the peasants ⁹⁵, by the variety of game in its plains and forests, and by the quantity of fish in its rivers ⁹⁶.

⁹⁴ Bell, in his entertaining and instructive travels, delivers the following warm panegyric on the country and climate of Siberia: "For my part, I think that had a person his liberty, and a few friends, there are few places where he could spend his life more agreeably than in some parts of Siberia." Vol. ii. p. 149. We do not question the sincerity of this writer's sentiments, although we must confess his taste appears rather singular, at least it would be thought so by that extravagant and persecuted genius Kotzebue.

⁹⁵ See a just encomium on the industry of the Siberian peasantry in Sauer's account of Billing's expedition to the northern parts of Russia, from 1785 to 1794, p. 9.

⁹⁶ See Harris's Voyages, vol. ii. p. 482, 483. *Voyage en Siberie*, par M. l'Abbé Chappe D'Auteroche, Amst. 1770, octavo edition, tom. ii. p. 328—602. *Voyages du P. Avzil*, liv. iii. *Essai sur le Commerce en Russie*, Amsterdam 1777, a most valuable work, p. 13.; and *Voyages en Siberie*, extraits des Journaux de divers savans Voyageurs, in two tomes, à Berne, 1791. Siberia is celebrated for the abundance and quality of its iron; and above sixty mines in the southern parts, were worked by the Russians in the time of Strahlenburg. See his *History of Siberia*, Lond. 1738, p. 342—387.

But

But these are not all the beneficial consequences that proceed from the discovery of Siberia; she opened a profitable road into the remote empire of China, and Russia now exchanges her precious furs for the silk, cotton, tea, rice, and toys of China, at the town of Kiachta, the centre of Russian and Chinese commerce.

The next object which merits a slight notice is the code of Ivan. In the nineteenth year of his age, that profound science which has exercised and baffled the mature wisdom of a Lycurgus, Solon, or Justinian, engaged his attention. The silence of the Russian annalists is a strong proof, that from the time of the first Yaorassaf, prince and lawgiver of Novgorod, to the sixteenth century, no addition had been made to his crude system of jurisprudence. To improve the laws of Yaorassaf, the Czar convoked an assembly of nobles, and, after balancing their opinions, he published, in 1550, his *soudebnik*, which name may be translated or explained by the *manual of Judges*⁹⁷.

But the code of this beardless legislator does not surpass his predecessors in accurate distinctions of right and wrong, which are of

⁹⁷ See Lacombe, p. 56. Strahlenburg, p. 204. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 293. Levesque, tom. iii. p. 153.

such importance to the peace and welfare of society. A few quotations from this civil labour of Ivan will be sufficient to justify this remark.

The first article is expressed in these words: "A man under an accusation of having set fire to a house, of theft, or murder, must always justify himself by arms." Such a pernicious law must inevitably strike at the root of public order and private tranquillity, since every villain might be effectually screened from punishment until his ill-fortune brought him to cope with an adversary superior in corporeal prowess and skill. The next cruel absurdity which meets our eye, is the trial of innocence or guilt by judicial combats. But this was too ancient a privilege of barbarous right for the warlike nobles of Russia to resign, or even for any bounds to be set to it by all the authority of Ivan. But the decree most repugnant to the temperate spirit of freedom, and the most favourable to the guilt of its overgrown oppressors, may be read in these words: "That the testimony of every nobleman shall have more weight than that of six persons of a mean situation of life".

⁹⁸ See Williams, p. 46, 47. who professes to have translated from the Russian language his detailed account of the code of Ivan.

Wonderful would be the decrease of vice and injustice, if the nobles of every nation were exempt from the frailties of their fellow-creatures. Yet, under the regulation for judges to take no fees in the discharge of their duties, and for those who considered their causes improperly settled to look up to their prince for redress, may be perceived some faint glimmering of justice.

It is no less extraordinary than fortunate for so vast an empire as Russia, which offers such a variety of native productions, that her sons, notwithstanding so many discouraging circumstances, should ever have manifested a great desire to enlarge the circle of their trade⁹⁹: and it is curious to observe them, under a long chain of domestic misfortunes, still seizing every opportunity to push with vigour their dar-

⁹⁹ The sagacious mind of Peter was well acquainted with the commercial temper of his subjects. When requested by his friend De Wittsen, the celebrated burgomaster of Amsterdam, to allow the settlement of the Jews of Amsterdam in his dominions, he returned for answer, "that although the Jews had the reputation of deceiving all the world in the affairs of commerce, he yet feared they would become dupes in their turn, when put in competition with his Russians." See *Anecdotes originales de Pierre le Grand*, p. 28. Notwithstanding this unfavourable opinion of the monarch, we still think that the sons of Israel might dispute the palm of deception with a tolerable chance of success.

ling

ling pursuit. When the face of barbarism and idolatry had darkened all the land of Russia, their love for traffic led them from the Baltic to the Euxine, from the mouth of the Oder, or ancient Viadrus, to the port of Constantinople. Stopped by the fatal conquests of the Tatars in their annual visits to the Byzantine nation, they only perhaps exchanged their commodities with their western neighbours. But when the sword of the third Ivan had avenged his country's wrongs, his active subjects again improved the prospects of peace; and such was their rapid increase of trade, and such the envy excited by it, that it gave rise, in the year 1553, to the very extraordinary confederacy of the Hanseatic Towns, which prohibited their subjects, under the pain of infamy, and the loss of their privileges, to trade at the port of Narva, the only one by which they could then carry on a commercial intercourse with Russia¹⁰⁰.

But the circulation of trade was increased by an unexpected event, which gave a new vigour to the industry of Russia, communicated to her a relish for the comforts of civil life, and roused such a spirit of curiosity and enterprize, as gradually lead to improvement,

¹⁰⁰ Thuanus, lib. xxxvi.

science and civility. The credit of imparting such advantages to the Russians, must be attributed to the active and daring genius of England. Influenced by the discoveries of the Portuguese and Spaniards, which left other European nations so far behind them, at that time, in commercial prosperity, and mortified at beholding their foreign trade crippled and almost ruined by this new course of traffic, the English, under the directions of Sebastian Cabot, a name deservedly of great celebrity in nautical affairs, steered towards the north-east in hopes of discovering new and opulent countries, which would revive the commercial spirit of the nation.

Two ships and a barque were speedily equipped for this memorable voyage, and entrusted to the command of Sir Henry Wil-
 houghby, an officer endowed with all the requisites for this hazardous undertaking. The admiral shaped his course northwards along the coast of Norway, and doubled the formidable north cape¹⁰¹. But in this stormy
 ocean

¹⁰¹ In the seamanlike narrative of Captain Allison, we have a complicated scene of human want and misery before his arrival at Celwitch upon the Cape. See his *Voyage to Archangel*, Lond. 1669, p. 56—64. For an interesting description of this rugged promontory, see the second volume of Acerbi's *Travels through Sweden, Finland, and Lap-*

ocean a furious tempest suddenly arose which dispersed his slender squadron. The misfortunes of Wilhoughby compelled him to seek refuge with his ships and a bark in the bay of the river Azzina, in Ruffia Lapland¹⁰², where he and all his companions perished in that frozen region. The more prosperous fortune of Richard Chancelour, the grand pilot of this expedition, drove him to the White Sea, and he wintered in safety at Archangel. The Ruffians, astonished at the machines in which the English had fearlessly explored unknown seas, since no ship of any foreign nation had ever visited before this quarter of the globe, not only received their new guests with the most flattering hospitality, but with a respect mingled with reverence. The English presently found, that this was a province of an immense empire, obedient to the Grand Prince, or Czar of Muscovy, who resided in a great city, twelve hundred miles from Archangel. Ivan, as soon as he received intelligence of the arrival of Chancelour, invited him to repair to Moscow, for he had discernment sufficient to comprehend all the social

land to the North Cape, chap. x. p. 110, 111;—a work deserving of general circulation, as it abounds with a variety of curious facts, and is executed with great vigour and judgment.

¹⁰² See Coxe's Northern Tour, fifth edition, vol. iii. p. 297.

con-

consequences that might proceed from establishing an intercourse between his territories and the western nations of Europe.

This high-spirited captain, whom no obstacles could daunt, or calamity depress, solicitous to achieve an enterprize which might redound at once to the fame and advantage of his country, and prove an honourable recompence to him for all his toils and dangers, did not hesitate for a moment to depart for Moscow. The reader may not be displeased to see the rude magnificence of the Russian court, and the manly behaviour of Chancelour before Ivan. Twelve days after their arrival at Moscow, they were admitted to an audience. In the apartments of the palace were an hundred officers of subordinate rank, in dresses of gold and silver. After being introduced to them, they passed on to the chamber of presence, where sat the sovereign of all Russia on a lofty throne, in a robe richly adorned with gold, his head encircled by a diadem of the same metal, bearing in his hand a sceptre ornamented with costly gems, and surrounded by an hundred and fifty of the chief persons of the state, in the richest apparel; while on the sides of this brilliant throne stood the chief secretary, and the great commander of silence, whose dresses were of similar splendour. The novelty, the

grandeur of the scene, the dignified countenance of the Czar, were well calculated to strike a reverential awe in the hearts of these unprotected strangers. But Chancelour, mindful only of the dignity and honour of the prince and nation which he represented on this solemn occasion, advanced to the Czar with a respectful but intrepid air, and after saluting Ivan, according to the manner of England, delivered to him a letter from king Edward the sixth, which the captain of each ship had received, for the sovereign of whatever country design or accident might lead them to discover. The letter being read, the Czar graciously inquired after the welfare of his royal master, to which Chancelour returned a brief and suitable answer. Their gifts were then delivered, and they quitted the presence, with an invitation to repair to a royal entertainment.

Two hours were elapsed in waiting at the apartments of the master of requests, before the summons came for them to repair to Ivan. This feast was held in the golden palace, in the ornaments of which the curious eye of the English could perceive but little taste. The Czar received their second visit on his throne, attired in a robe of silver, and another diadem around his head. Their respective

seats were opposite to the monarch. In the middle of this hall stood a great table of a pyramidal form, profusely covered with goblets of gold and silver, solely appropriated for Ivan's use: four other tables covered with fine linen, were raised by several steps on each side of the hall. The most precious furs adorned the persons of this illustrious assembly. Before the meat was placed on the table, the Czar, according to an ancient custom, first crossed himself, presenting to each guest a piece of bread, while the officer in a loud tone exclaimed, "This is the gift of the Great Duke of Muscovy, Emperor of Russia, Ivan Vassilévitz." When these words were finished, the guests arose to pay their homage.

A considerable time must have been consumed by the offering of the bread, as the rank and title of every guest were successively pronounced, and one hundred and forty servants, in habits of gold, experienced a similar bounty from their prince. When this tedious ceremony was finished, the gentleman usher entered with a crowd of domestics carrying the dishes; after having expressed his obedience to the Czar, he placed a young swan in a golden platter upon the table, which was then delivered to the carver to be cut up by seven of his fellows; which work being con-

cluded, the meat was distributed with the like pomp and ceremonies. All the different services were of pure gold, and the festive board almost groaned beneath the weight of the golden vessels which were placed for the use of an hundred guests. When the dinner was ended, the sober English retired, and left the Czar and his courtiers perhaps to indulge in all the intemperate riot of a nocturnal banquet. Such was the friendly and splendid reception of Chancelour and his men¹⁰², which displays the character of Ivan to great advantage. But to the praises of this hospitality must be added the still more valuable invitation¹⁰³ to traffic in the Russian dominions, which was made under such alluring promises of protection and favour, that a lucrative intercourse was opened with this vast empire, by which the English had soon ample scope to rival other nations of the most

¹⁰² We are indebted for our information of this interesting and singular interview to the curious and ample collection of voyages, published by Richard Hackluyt, prebendary of Westminster, vol. i. p. 246, 247-249, 250. Dr. Robertson, in his History of America, vol. iv. p. 177. has pronounced a very just panegyric on the judicious patriotism and commercial attainments of this extraordinary man.

¹⁰³ See in Hackluyt a copy of Ivan's letter sent to king Edward the sixth by the hands of Richard Chancelour vol. i. p. 255.

distinguished repute in commercial enterprise ¹⁰⁴.

A few years after this occurrence, which has proved so beneficial to the mercantile interests of England and Russia, the Czar, anxious to give a still more diffusive energy to the trading capacity of his subjects, opened at Narva, a mart for foreign merchants. The English, the Dutch, and the French came to it; and his permission to the Lubeckers to trade there, proves that the anger of Ivan was not so lasting but that he could wisely sacrifice it to his interest. This new establishment was viewed with jealousy by the grand master of the Teutonic Order, the bishop of Riga, and Eric king of Sweden. In hopes of relief, they laid their complaint before the emperor Ferdinand ¹⁰⁵; but the port of Narva still

¹⁰⁴ The English Russian Company remained entire masters of this commerce of the Archangel until the death of Charles I. The Dutch having then great interest at the Russian court, its artful ministers contrived, under the pretence of revenge against a nation who had murdered their king, to introduce their countrymen into the Archangel trade, upon the condition of their paying fifteen per cent. upon both imports and exports: the consequence was, that the industry of the Hollanders so much improved this partial favour of the Czar, that in 1689, the Polish envoy affirmed that they possessed no less than two hundred factors at Archangel. See Anderson on Commerce, vol. ii. p. 408, 409.

¹⁰⁵ Thuanus, lib. xxxvi.

flourished, notwithstanding the warm and repeated remonstrances of these neighbouring potentates. But what did they expect to draw from Russia at this new erected seat of trade, since before the establishment of Archangel, she yielded from her fruitful provinces, at the bay of St. Nicholas, the following articles, kaviar, dry fish, isinglass, wax, hemp, oil, tar, tallow, wool, timber, and corn ¹⁰⁶.

When Ivan had extended his power over the warlike and turbulent realms of Kazan and Astrakan, he greatly enlarged the bounds of Russian commerce. The ¹⁰⁷ distant caravans of Bucharía and Persia, no longer dreading the sudden attacks of the predatory Tatars, were induced to empty their valuable stores at Moscow; while the Nogais ¹⁰⁸, the fiercest of these once destructive hordes, annually resorted thither from the south, on the peaceable errand of selling forty thousand horses at a small price, who were less remarkable for their beauty than for their enduring in a surprising manner both hunger and fatigue.

¹⁰⁶ To mark the increase of their importation, see *Essai sur la Commerce de Russie*, par M. Marbault.

¹⁰⁷ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 350.

¹⁰⁸ *Iter in Moschoviam Descriptum*, ab Augustino Barone de Mayerburg, 1661, p. 32.

With

With the progress of commerce the arts are accelerated: but a people must have held an uninterrupted intercourse with other nations, and improved themselves by their inventions and discoveries, before they can arrive to any perfection themselves. The great eruption of the Tatars, which was fatal to every science, deprived the Russians of these opportunities and pretensions. But all their accumulated misfortunes could not efface from their recollection two branches of trade, which seemed to be peculiar to their own country, the art of boiling and crystallizing salt, and that of preparing those skins of such estimation, under the name of the skins of Russia¹⁰⁹. The author, from whose opinions and diligent learning many of the principal facts of this work are extracted, suspects that this last invention owes its origin to the skill of the Bulgarians.

Without scrutinizing the merit of some historians, we must condemn their ignorance, remissness, or prejudice, which led them to pass over in total silence the working of the mines in Russia, since the accurate researches

¹⁰⁹ For a circumstantial account of the curious preparation of these famous skins, see *Voyages chez les Peuples Kalmouks & les Tatars*. Berne, 1792, p. 218, &c.

of a late high authority¹¹⁰ have sufficiently proved, that the mines of iron were well-known to the industry and avarice of ancient times: and it is certain that the unwholesome labour was known and practised in the time of Ivan, although it did not then form a principal part of commercial wealth¹¹¹.

We shall close these detached observations, which could not be thrown into the body of our work, with a cursory view of the wretched state of the arts and literature of the times, with Ivan's laudable endeavours to improve them, and with an anecdote or two to shew that the Russians, nursed in despotism, and sunk by the weight of their own apathy and ignorance, were incapable of imbibing any just and liberal sentiments of the dignity of human nature.

The Russians had maintained too fastidious a reserve with other nations, to possess many of the arts and comforts of life: the sagacity of the Czar perceived the extent of the evil, and sought

¹¹⁰ Muller apud Levesque, tom. iii. p. 159. Le Clerc and Tooke must be also exempted from this censure.

¹¹¹ "Auri et argenti fodinas non esse audivi; ferri sunt, quod quidem homines non adeo industriè ægrè ad usum aptant." Ant. Possev. Moscov. p. 25. Fletcher, who visited Russia in the reign of the imbecile Fedor, likewise speaks of the iron of Russia, p. 11. Under the Czar Alexis was established the first regular mining. See Tooke's View of the Russian Empire, vol. iii. p. 405.

to apply the remedy. The wealth and ingenuity of England supplied him with mechanics and workmen of almost every sort. Alured by the hopes of making fortunes, men of different talents had assembled at Lubeck, with the design of embarking for Russia. In the first rank we must place the sedentary professions of the painter, sculptor, and watchmaker; the second was filled with the more active trades of the miner, the armourer, the mason, the bellfounder, the architect, and stationer; but he lost this cargo of knowledge by the intrigues of the merchants of Lubeck, and more especially by the Livonians, whose mean conduct in this affair was in the end punished by the Czar¹¹².

Ivan might assume the character of a learned man, in a country where literature stood at so low an ebb that to be able to read was considered as a rare intellectual attainment. This prince could read the Bible. But the seeds of learning were difficult to procure, if the soil has been ever so favourable for their cultivation; the rudeness of early ages made the manuscript copies of this holy book both scarce and valuable; and when accident or

¹¹² See *Essai sur la Bibliothèque & le Cabinet Naturelle de l'Académie des Sciences de St. Pétersbourg*, par Jean Backmeister, p. 32. Several curious historical facts are to be gleaned from this work.

money threw them into their hands, they were rendered almost useless, by the hurry and ignorance of the transcribers¹¹³.

The Czar wished his subjects to purchase sacred books at a low price in the markets; in this he was mightily assisted by the casual intelligence of the art of printing. To transplant into his remote country an art which gives immortality to the efforts of great minds, he immediately furnished the necessary sums to the printers whose names were Ivan Hoderfon and Peter Timofroffsom¹¹⁴. An edition of the Gospels, the Acts, and some of the Epistles, was the first undertaking of his infant press¹¹⁵.

But so slow were their advances, that it required ten years' labour before the laudable pride of the Czar could boast of this work being executed by national skill.

In this encouragement of printing, he declared himself the true servant of religion. But the inferior clergy of his kingdom were little calculated to benefit by his enlightened

¹¹³ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 162.

¹¹⁴ See Nichols's Supplement to his Origin of Printing, 1781, p. 288.

¹¹⁵ This printing-house was afterwards burnt down; the flames are supposed to have been kindled either by the hands or by the contrivance of the clergy, who dreaded the improvement of the people as a public evil. See Fletcher, p. 86.

proceedings¹¹⁶. The gratitude and learning of the monks were not capable even of naming the pious founder of their order¹¹⁷. Three men only in Russia, besides the physicians, who were few in number, could vie with each other in the knowledge of the Latin language, and they were of Polish extraction; and what appears still more surprising and reprehensible to this enlightened age, with all their blind devotion to the Greek church¹¹⁸, none could be found to repeat the words of that elegant tongue.

¹¹⁶ In the picture of the Russian priests, how the figures of vice, indolence, superstition, and impiety, are made to stand out by the hand of prejudice or truth: "*Capillis ad humeros & pectus dependentibus apprimè gaudent; & quo quisque est nigrior & adspèctu inamabilior tantò majori apud populum est in dignatione. Rasò prætereà vertice & immissa barba, gravitatem præ se ferunt singularem. Vitæ alioqui adeò impuræ & execrabilis, ut non delubris Deorum, sed pistrinis molitorum dignos adfirmare possis. Si quoties enorme aliquod flagitium perpetrant, ad populum se satis arroganter excusant, seque Deorum fratres & vicarios esse aiunt. In tabernis publicis, vinum adustum totos dies potant. Cumque jam nec mens nec pedes officium faciunt, sepe velut emortui in mediis palatiis concidunt & obdormiscunt.*" De Religione Russorum, p. 240, 241.

¹¹⁷ "Mira interiorum literarum ignoratio est; ita ut nec quis sit sui auctor instituit aliqui respondere sciverint, cum hæc de iis quæreremus." Ant. Possév. Moscov. p. 91.

¹¹⁸ "Libros Latinos et Græcos nunquam viderunt, et tamen de religione Græcorum multa gloriantur." De Religione Russorum, &c. p. 249.

'The

The Russians thought they best practised the mild duties of Christianity, in testifying an uniform hatred to all those who had presumed to enlist under any standard of religion but their own. But the church¹¹⁹ of Rome most provoked their indignation; and the heaviest curse which they could heap on an enemy, was to wish him to die attached to the faith of the Latin pontiff. Their more enlightened sovereign could not preserve himself entirely free from these prejudices. On presenting his hand to heretical ambassadors, he never failed to wash it in a vessel of gold, purposely placed in the hall of audience¹²⁰. Yet he was not so much the slave of superstition, but that he could easily throw off its chains when they bound him against the real interests of his country. Compelled to solicit strangers to instruct his people, his enthusiasm in the cause of the Greek church however wisely abstained from exercising an improper control over their consciences: nor could he be compared to those weak princes, whose overstrained zeal for religion suffers them to become the tools

¹¹⁹ "Papæ Romani nomen ægrè in aures dimittunt suas," *De Religione Russorum*, p. 237.

¹²⁰ See *Relatione Curieuse de la Moscovie*. Par. 1687. p. 65. and *La Religion ancienne & moderne des Moscovites*, p. 18.

of its ministers: the sword of despotism alike hung over the heads of the clergy, as the nobles; and his passion, or caprice, frequently drew it from the scabbard to cut off the most sacred of their episcopal privileges¹²¹. According to ancient usage, the election of the metropolitans must be ratified by the patriarch of Constantinople; but Ivan dispensed with this obligation, and consulted only in their promotion or debasement, the dictates of his own free will.

With the power to oppress, Ivan affected the pontifical dress. A tiara loaded with diamonds adorned his head; his sceptre, studded with large balls of crystal, resembling the pastoral staff of the primate of the Greek church; his long robe was after the fashion of the pope, when he assists at the imposing ceremonies of his religion; above his seat, and by his right side, were placed the images of our Saviour and his mother. His profane¹²² vanity seemed almost to aspire to the order of a superior being: whenever supplicated to grant a favour, he replied with emphasis, "Conclude it done, if God commands the request." In all his acts he wished to be recognized by his subjects as the delegate of God; in

¹²¹ Ant. Possev. Moscov. p. 89, 90.

¹²² Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 352.

this character, all his bloody violences were no sooner committed than of course cancelled. Thus did he sap the basis of every moral virtue when he most professed to assent to its decrees¹²³; and probably from his impious claims to heavenly communications, arose that common saying of the Russians, when they were ignorant of any transaction, "That it is known both to God and the Czar"¹²⁴. While so completely were the sentiments of nature lost in the habits of education, and by a round of unremitted tyranny, that it may be doubted if any accident had produced their deliverance from the Czar, whether they would have been capable of enjoying a rational freedom. For, whenever this despot chastised his nobles for some petty offence, under all the agonies of the knout, they would exclaim at the feet of their oppressor, May you reign long and happy, O illustrious

¹²³ Observe in this sentence the close similarity between the advice of Machiavel and the conduct of Ivan, in his external zeal and respect for religion. "E non é cosa piú necessaria a parere d'havere," says this prince of Italian politicians; "che questa ultima, qualita, (religion,) perche gli huomini in universale giudicano piú à gliocchi che alle mani, perche toca à vedere à ciascuno, à sentire à pochi." See Machiavelli Opere, 1550, libro del principe, cap. xviii. p. 54. The barbarity of this prince perhaps would have been no impediment to a successful study of several parts of this famous treatise of politics.

¹²⁴ Guagnini, p. 183.

prince,

prince, who honour your faithful subjects with such innumerable favours, and who condescended to punish them for the generous purpose of improving their conduct¹²³.

¹²³ This passage is worthy to be transcribed for its reaching the acme of human servitude. "Illi vero tunc temporis amoris signum principem in se exhibuisse gloriantur, verberatique gratias principi agant, dicentes; Sanus tu sis et incolumis, domine Rex & Dux magne, quod me servum rusticumque tuum verberibus emendare dignatus sis." Guagnini, p. 183.—That original genius and benefactor of his country, Peter the Great, was obliged to have recourse to the most rigorous measures to wean the Russians from their grovelling submission. It was the ancient custom of the Russians to fall down upon their knees whenever their sovereign appeared in the public streets; Peter, whose love of freedom and of reason, taught him to despise such abject homage, always made a sign to them that he chose to dispense with this etiquette; but he could not break them of their old slavish habits, until he proclaimed that all those who performed this odious genuflexion, should be punished with the knot. See *Anecdotes Origin. de Pierre le Grand*, p. 73. It may be almost said of *such men*, that he did an ill office to shew them the least marks of independence.

REVOLUTION THE SEVENTH.

The Extinction of the House of Rurik; the Usurpation of Boris and Demetrius, and the Establishment of the House of Romanof.

WE now open that grand scene which forms the joyful catastrophe of the ancient dynasty, and conveys the sceptre to a new race of princes, whose power was destined to shine forth with a mighty lustre in the eyes of Europe. Under them were first to appear those liberal principles of administration which harmonize, beautify, and polish private society. Under them, maritime communications were to be maintained along the shores of a continent of immense extent; noble foundations of charity public and private to be established, stupendous works of national honour to be erected, population to increase, agriculture to advance, and wealth to be wafted into those cities which had so long been the seat of penury and oppression. Under them also the spirit of science, which had been fettered by the grossness of early superstition, and by the influence of external controul, was to emerge with such dignity and

and vigour, as to effect a most considerable and happy change in the sentiments of the higher ranks, and in the habits of the lower, by disseminating those seeds of taste which stimulate the mind to the cultivation of every polite attainment. Lastly, under them the design of the architect, the chissel of the statuary, the pencil of the artist, and the skill of the mechanic, were to be encouraged and rewarded with all the munificence of imperial patriotism.

The example of several princes, and the last will of the absolute Ivan, made the rights of primogeniture respected in the person of his son Fedor. Without meeting therefore any opposition, he saw himself quietly seated on the throne of Russia, at the age of thirty-seven; and, as it often happens, when the rights of the people are irrecoverably gone, they are shadowed out by some outward form, where the nation seems to bestow that authority on their prince, which is in reality so far removed from their possession; thus the representatives of the cities, selected from the most considerable of the nobility, assembled at Moscow for the absurd purpose of entreating Fedor to accept the empire, and to sanctify his

* For this short reign, we are principally indebted to Levesque, tom. iii. p. 206—229.

power, by the ceremony of his coronation. The solemn farce was closed by the consent of the prince to their ardent supplications; when had the smallest reluctance been indicated against his election, his pretensions would have been supported beyond doubt by the avowed power of the sword, or by the secret dagger of assassination.

But^a Fedor was ill-calculated to sustain with credit all the honours and labours of a great empire: the impotence of mind was equal to the weakness of his body: his favourite recreation consisted in disputing with his servants of the church the glory of giving the greatest melody to the bells^b. The Czar his father, whose iron sway had never been thwarted, conceived he was able, even from his tomb to exercise the same influence over his subjects; with this view he nominated three boyars to direct the councils of his son, and to preside in the name of this *Arcadius* of the Russian palace^c.

^a Our countryman Giles Fletcher, who held a distinguished rank in the embassy to Russia, 1591, speaks of the puerile mind and insignificant character of this prince; p. 110.

^b See a brief Historical Relation of the Empire of Russia, Lond. 1654, p. 5.

^c An anonymous writer has dismissed his character in these expressive words: "Theodorus, the heir of his father's empire, though not of his greatness." See Russian Impostor; or the History of Muscovy under the usurpation of Boris, and the imposture of Demetrius; Lond. 1674, p. 2.

All three were conspicuous by their talents, civil and military, personal courage, and splendid extraction. All three were in the end driven from their great stations; but the fall of one must have been mitigated, could he have foreseen the future grandeur of his posterity. The names of these princes who appeared on the theatre of this history, were Ivan Petrovitz Chouiski, Ivan Federovitz Mstislavski, and Nikite Romanovitz Yurief⁵. The first could boast an alliance with the house of Rurik; the blood of the princes of Lithuania flowed in the veins of the second; whilst the third was grandfather to Michael Romanof, the illustrious founder of the reigning house of Russia.

The next character in ability and consequence was Bogdan Belski, who, from an insignificant situation, had raised himself by his arts to the high office of superintendant of the education of the young Demetrius⁶, the brother of Fedor. This man, instigated by an ambition which no danger could deter, formed the project of subverting the Government of Fedor, and establishing in

⁵ Neugebaver relates, that the policy of Ivan named *four* counsellors of eminence to support the weak throne of Fedor. See Comment. Moscov. cap. i., p. 7.

⁶ See the History of Russia in the Universal History, vol. xxxv. p. 264.

his place the prince Demetrius, in the expectation of ruling over Russia, under the name of his infant pupil. But this was a design fraught with too much peril and difficulty to be executed without accomplices; and his unfortunate selection of them ruined him. After all his expedients to ensure success had been communicated to those he had trusted, they then scattered the report among the people, that Ivan⁷ had been taken off by poison, and that Belski now entertained the flagrant design of massacring at the same time the prince and his boyars.

No sooner was this rumour spread among the multitude, than they rushed to the Kremlin, and with the aid of some of the corps of nobility, pointed artillery against the principal gate of the palace; and in their loyalty to Fedor, they demanded the head of Belski. All the admonitions of Yurief and Mstislavski, who had been apprized of this insurrection, were drowned by their loud vociferations. The ministers, forced to retire, soon afterwards returned with an order from their prince to transport Belski to Nigny-Novgorod. At the same time to appease their fury, the boyars, for whose safety they had expressed such a lively concern, presented

⁷ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 370.

themselves to the people; the fumes of popular zeal evaporated immediately on their appearance; and, without entreaty, they peaceably sought their homes.

But a more sagacious and steady adventurer now aspired to the supreme authority, whose measures, though slow in their operation, yet were well contrived, and productive in the end of the greatest success. Boris Fedorovitz Goudonouf, for that was the name of this daring traitor, was the brother of Irene, the wife of the Czar. He was descended from Tchet, a Tatar prince, who entered the Russian service about the fourteenth century, under the reign of Ivan Kalita.

Boris, born in 1552, soon obtained the affection and favor of the late Ivan. When his sister was honoured with the hand of the presumptive heir of the empire, it was then thought he had reached the summit of his desires; but the love of moderation could not be numbered in the list of his virtues.

His system of aggrandizement was drawn out on the commencement of the new reign. All persons formidable either by their birth or talents, and whose stations protected them from his open attacks, he sought to strip of all honour and trust*, whilst none escaped his

* Lacombe, p. 58.

sanguinary rage who obstructed that ruling passion of his soul, ambition, for the gratification of which he spurned all restraints which a sense of honour or desire of fame should impose⁹. Among the objects of his hatred, the infant Demetrius was the first to experience his persecution. The late Czar had destined the city of Uglitz for his appanage; but it was remote from his intention to have him confined to that place. Goudonouf immediately perceived that the prince's departure from Moscow must be hastened, or his projects would become abortive. He suffered therefore no narrow temporising expedients of policy to weaken or interfere with his views. By exciting the suspicions of the despicable Fedor against that venerable princess the Czarina his stepmother, he contrived to remove the young prince from her protection, and, to baffle all her attempts of revenge, he dispersed her kinsmen into different places of exile, under a charge of treason.

⁹ "Capable de tout entreprendre, & de tout executer ; n'ayant de religion, d'honneur & de probité qu'autant que sa politique l'exigeoit ;" are the just words of M. de Rochelle in his character of Boris. See *Le Czar Demetrius, Histoire Moscovite*, à La Haye, 1716, p. 5, 6. If this writer had condescended more frequently to consult authentic testimonies in the relation of his history, his narrative would have been executed with greater success.

Thus

Thus the daring mind of Goudonouf burst through every barrier of decency and humanity, and endeavoured to surmount every impediment that opposed his schemes. Already possessed of an immense fortune¹⁰, and of the highest station that a subject could attain, he employed all his resources to undermine that formidable structure of authority which surrounded Mstislavski, Yurief, and Chouiski, the two former of whom seized every opportunity to treat this favourite with a studied neglect. 1585. These ministers, whether they had detected his intrigues, or whether they harboured themselves any designs inimical to the peace of the state, succeeded in bringing over a large party of the nobility to their cause; whilst the mercantile interest had openly attested their attachment to them, and the assistance of the army was reckoned upon with considerable confidence. But Goudonouf soon disconcerted all their arrangements, by teaching Fedor to think, that they were secretly forming a conspiracy against his power and person!!

¹⁰ Mr. Tooke says in a note, that he possessed a yearly income of about an hundred thousand rubles. History of Russia, vol. i. p. 303. When it is recollected that the ruble then considerably exceeded the value of five shillings English, the riches of Boris must appear respectable even in the eyes of modern princes.

¹¹ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 371.

His assertions had the desired effect: the prince Mstislavski was arrested, compelled to assume the habit of a monk, and banished to the monastery Bielozero. Nikite Yurief escaped for the present the ferocious cruelty of Boris, either because he durst not publicly oppress the uncle of the Czar, or because his person was so much revered by the people; but he terminated soon afterwards his unhappy career, not without the suspicion of having perished either by the hand of the executioner, or by poison. The chiefs of other illustrious families, supposed to be connected with this fancied conspiracy, without the form of a trial, were shut up in the different dungeons of the empire.

The fate of Chouiski was only protracted, to be rendered more miserable. This prince had been led to believe that all enmity had ceased between him and Boris, by the mild expostulations of the metropolitan Dionysius, whereas it was only smothered for a while to break out with increased violence; for if he pretended to abjure all hatred on the pressing remonstrances of the prelate, it was from no other reason, but that he felt himself at that time overawed by the firmness and ability of Chouiski.

But the conduct of Chouiski soon put an end to their patched up friendship. In a convention

vention of the mal-contents, it was proposed, and approved as the only expedient for weakening the power of Boris, to engage the Czar to divorce Irene, who had as yet produced no fruit of their union. Chouiski was the author of this advice, whilst many persons, remarkable for their mildness and moderation, supported this opinion, from its tendency to strengthen the tottering basis of the state; at the head of which was the amiable metropolitan, whose very words in this spiritual affair were almost considered as inspired by Heaven.

To counteract the weight of so respectable an association, required the most strenuous efforts of Boris, who judiciously foresaw, that this wound which was given to his ambition with such well-directed force by the hand of Chouiski, could only be healed and revenged by alienating the primatè from their cause; to accomplish which, he expatiated, with a seeming equanimity, on the inconveniencies of this repudiation, and its palpable infringement on the laws of the church. He also observed, that no other circumstance called for the ratification of an act so odious, since an heir of the crown already existed in the person of the young Demetrius, who gave every promise of living to enjoy his honours. Dionysius, struck with the justness of these representations,

presentations, abandoned this confederacy, which soon dwindled into contempt, when no longer sanctioned by his great ecclesiastical authority.

1587. The fate of Chouiski was now verging to its crisis: his last offence had extinguished all marks of compunction in the breast of Boris. One of the domestics of Chouiski, charged his master with treason; an accusation which would have been generative of no dangerous consequences, had it not been carried on under the contrivance of Boris. Some merchants and slaves also were put to the torture, in hopes of extracting from their sufferings a confession of the guilt of their protector; but the innocence of Chouiski was only more clearly established by the heroic fortitude with which they braved the malignity of Boris in their patron's cause.

Notwithstanding his crime could not be proved, yet he was sent into exile. Boris soon afterwards completed his revenge, by dispatching some of his minions to strangle this meritorious nobleman in the place of his retirement ¹².

¹² The ignorance or humanity of Rochelle inclines him to remove the three counsellors of Fedor to distant provinces of the empire with the rank and authority of governors. See *Le Czar Demetrius*, p. 7.

Dionysius himself was the next destined victim of the implacable Boris. Touched with the melancholy posture of affairs, jealous of fame, and careless of safety, this pontiff, in conjunction with two other prelates of the same intrepid spirit, addressed the Czar on the conduct of his brother-in-law, and at the hazard of their heads they intreated him, in the name of humanity, to restrain that persecuting spirit which shed so much innocent blood. The moment Godounof was informed of their petition, he desired Fedor, over whose mind and person he had acquired an entire power, to strip off those sacred robes which they had so long worn with becoming sanctity; reduced to the state of monks, they were shut up in different monasteries; whilst the people could only deplore the fate they were unable to prevent.

The bishop of Rostof, named Job, was advanced to the rank of metropolitan; he soon afterwards obtained another title, which the Russians for a long time regarded with the greatest reverence. The patriarch of Constantinople had come to Moscow to solicit the Czar's assistance for the church, and in order to secure the success of his under-

²² Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 371

taking,

taking, he represented to him, that the church, in the days of her prosperity, had been governed by these five leaders, the bishop of Rome and the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, and Jerusalem. But as the Pope had lost his rank by his innumerable heresies, and the Russian people were so auspicious to the interest of the gospel, he proposed to consecrate the metropolitan in quality of patriarch. To this offer the Czar gave his consent.

By this new title, their divine worship was still more encumbered by a variety of idle and superfluous forms, which made the Russians still greater strangers to the true object of devotion, the oblation of the heart. From the æra that Russia had this ecclesiastical dignity conferred upon her, may be dated her separation from the patriarch of Constantinople¹⁴.

But these transactions which, in a cursory view, appear so totally unconnected with the schemes of Boris, will be found, on a more close examination, to have arisen from them. The advancement of the bishop of Rostof to the seat of metropolitan gave him strong claims to his gratitude; whilst his intended

¹⁴ See King's valuable work on the Greek Church, Lond. 1772, p. 427.

usurpation would be sheltered and confirmed under the influence and sacred character of the patriarch.

To crush his infant enemy Demetrius, who 1592 might now be deemed the only obstacle to his ambition, formed the next consideration. That deed was done by his partizans. But we shall avoid relating, in this place, the death of Demetrius, as it is so intimately blended with a transaction which will hereafter merit an inquiry from its uncommon features of novelty. To give it therefore in dismembered parts, would create only an indistinct and fleeting impression, whereas by combining it in one strong assemblage, the clue is preserved, and a warm interest perhaps excited in the mind of the reader. A profusion of glaring and detached lights thrown into a picture, serve more to destroy than to heighten the general effect.

Boris might now imagine, with some degree of probability, that the tide of his prosperity would flow on in the most uninterrupted course. But Fortune, as if she took a pleasure always to torment him when he was nearest to the accomplishment of his wishes, raised up another obstacle to his ambition. The Czarina, after her long barrenness, 1592 was delivered of a daughter, who received the name of Theodosia. The Czar, in the

the transports of his happiness, for so unexpected an event, liberated many prisoners who had been condemned to death, distributed handsome presents to the several monasteries, and transmitted considerable sums even to Palestine, to obtain the prayers of the pious throughout the Holy Land, for the health of the young princefs. This great joy was however followed by the most profound
 1593. sorrow. Theodosia died in the first year of her age. Could she live when her life was unavoidable, as each moment of her life so strongly clashed with the interests of her uncle ¹⁵.

Fedor now only opposed his ambition. His death happened about the seventh January, but whether it was accelerated by the
 1598. ordinary course of nature, or by the more culpable means of force, is impossible to discover ¹⁶.

¹⁵ "Pouvait-elle vivre," inquires the observing and judicious Levesque, "lorsque la durée de ses jours était contraire au dessein de Godounof."

¹⁶ Mr. Williams, who is too apt to transgress the bounds of historical truth to gratify his prejudice, without the least hesitation accuses Boris of poisoning Fedor, p. 52. An historian however who treats his subject with more impartiality observes, "That it is more than conjectural that his end was hastened by the impatience of Boris and the violence of a secret poison." Russian Impostor, p. 9. The authority of Levesque, Le Clerc, and Cox, gives however a contrary weight to this assertion.

In

In Fedor expired the last sovereign of the house of Rurik. Of all men he seems to have been the least fitted to preside over a turbulent and warlike people. He neither possessed courage, vigour, industry, penetration, nor enterprize¹⁷. Incapable of curbing the licentiousness of his nobles with a strong hand, he was forced to put the government into their hands; by which means, both he and his people became an easy prey to their rapaciousness and ambition; nor was this weakness of disposition alleviated by the innocence of his intentions. After a reign of about eleven years in which his 1598. indolence, levity, and fickleness, had prepared the way for a series of public disorders, he died as he lived, without notice and without esteem¹⁸.

¹⁷ "Fedor mourut," observes the sensible Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 373, "en 1598, après avoir *végété* pendant ii ans dans le trône."

¹⁸ Read in the Universal Hist. vol. xxxv. p. 273, 274. and reject the ridiculous account of the elevation of Boris to the vacant throne, and in the same page reconcile, if possible, this sentence with the concurrent testimony of all authentic historians:—"Theodore died, after a reign of twelve years, not without suspicion of his having been poisoned by his brother-in-law. *The Czarina seemed so sensible of this, that she strongly reproached her brother Boris Goudenow with the murder of her husband and would never speak to him afterwards.*"

' No sooner had the funeral rites of the prince been performed, than the Czarina convoked the patriarch, the chief members of the clergy, and most of the nobility. In a speech of artless brevity she declared to them that the Czar on his death-bed, had commanded her to renounce the world, and in the solitude of a monastery, consecrate her days to God. At this voluntary resignation of her power,¹ with one voice, they intreated her to accept the government, although Russia had acknowledged no feminine sway for the space of seven hundred years, except in the minority of their sons.

Their solicitations were however disregarded; she retired to a convent in Moscow, on the sixteenth of January, and there took the habit under the name of Alexandra. How rarely does the scroll of history produce so striking an example of female moderation! Boris accompanied his sister under the plausible pretext of helping her to secure the tranquillity of the state, until her successor was appointed².

By

¹ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 230—234.

² See Russian Impostor, p. 9, 10.

³ ——— " Et pour mieux couvrir son jeu, il s'enferma dans un convent, — pendant qu'il faisoit presser son élection par quelques uns de ses amis à l'instance supplication, desquels il

By the death of the last Czar the reigning branch became extinct⁴; but although the cruelty of Ivan and of Boris, had swept away so many great families, yet the blood of Rurik was still remotely preserved through all the forms of the ancient dynasty. There still remained many princes derived from the stock of that venerable house; whose claims therefore in this approaching election would have been incontestible, had the people been unwilling to deviate from the order of a regular hereditary succession. Yet their rights, far from being discussed with the domineering tone of precedency, at this critical juncture of affairs, were mingled without distinction in the numerous roll of candidates who started for the imperial prize. Thus Boris possessed too strong an interest among the nobles and the people to suspect his hopes would be frustrated in the assembly which disposed of the crown.

With discreet silence he therefore awaited the event in the monastery with his sister. To the palace of the patriarch, (whose spiritual do-

il fit semblant de se laisser vaincre, et d'accepter la couronne;" is the decisive sentence of that curious and intelligent traveller Adan Olearius. See *Voyage en Moscovie*, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 264.

⁴ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 458.

minion, by the aid of superstition and her genuine offspring, credulity, was now so extensive over the minds and sentiments of men,) the clergy, the nobility, and citizens of the different towns repaired for the election of a sovereign; it may easily be supposed that by the exertions of the patriarch the wishes of Godounof were gratified.

No sooner had the people been informed that Boris was the successful candidate, than they ran in great crowds to the monastery where he was shut up with his sister in close conference; the doors were broken open with respectful violence; and with ^s loud acclamations he was congratulated on his honours; for his political knowledge, his munificence, his judicious mixture of rigour and mildness, his indefatigable application to business, and his impartial administration of justice⁶, (where his own interest did not interfere,)

⁵ See A brief historical Relation of the Empire of Russia, p. 5—7.

⁶ The following example may be produced of the severity of his justice. “The chancellor of the province of Rezan having been tempted by the bribe of one hundred rubles (fifty pounds) unjustly to decree a poor widow’s land of inheritance from her, the inflexible Czar, on the proof of the fact, commanded the degraded chancellor to carry a bag of money upon his neck to the same amount, and to be whipped by the common hangman from the great chancery office to the market place, and back to the same place. And
not

terfere,) procured from the people, who were ignorant of his crimes, a large portion of their esteem and affection. But Boris had the hypocrisy to refuse that rank which he had sought by so much blood and labour; demanded that they should proceed to a new election, and declared his resolution of taking the monastic habit.

On this refusal they convened a fresh meeting for another election; but measures were so well concerted by his numerous partizans, that he was again chosen to hold the reins of government. After the second appointment of Boris, the patriarch, preceded by the clergy, who carried the cross and images, and followed by the whole body of electors, presented themselves to the Czarina. By their urgent importunities they prevailed on the princess to engage her brother to ascend the throne. Boris therefore, after

not content with this punishment, he ordered the money there to be melted and poured down his throat; all which," says the writer, (perhaps an eye witness of the distressing scene,) "was done accordingly." See *A brief historical Relation of the Empire of Russia*, p. 11, 12. However every friend to humanity may consider the offence exceeded by the penalty, yet it must be acknowledged that this extraordinary rigour had the desired effect of making him very formidable to the guilty.

the appearance of a decent resistance⁷, was persuaded to yield himself up to the ardent desire of the nation.

But the preparations for his coronation were interrupted by the alarming intelligence that the Krimean Khan was preparing to fall on Russia, supplied with seven thousand janissaries by the Ottoman court ; and the first act of Boris, when he stood acknowledged as the sole master of Russia, evinces his strong desire to be equally distinguished as a statesman and warrior. Of too wise and martial a spirit to idle away his time in absurd pomp, when the Tatars threatened his empire, he proceeded to Serpouklof (the place of rendezvous for the whole army), eager to testify against those constant disturbers of Russia, his zeal for his own glory, and the general safety. Instead, however, of beholding the rapidity of the Khan's warlike movements, he was met only by his peaceful deputies ; compelled to sheathe his sword by their submissive behaviour, he formed the plan of impressing these barbarians with reverence for his person, by displaying with ostentation the greatness and discipline of Russia.

⁷ See Tooke, vol. i. p. 305, 306. Russian Impostor, p. 12.
 "Après quelques refus étudiez, il se rendit à leur prières."
 Rochelle, p. 14. See likewise Lacombe, p. 60.

His

His immense army, amounting to five hundred thousand men*, whose horses, armour, clothing, and weapons, had been provided with the greatest care, still occupied a plain on the banks of the Oka. When these Tatar envoys had advanced within seven versts of the camp they were commanded to halt; the whole night preceding their audience, the cannon kept up an incessant fire. At the break of day, the troops were under arms from the quarters of the Czar to the tents of the deputies. The cavalry was posted behind the infantry, which formed a line on each side of the road. The Tatars, awestruck at such martial pomp, could with difficulty find their voices, when admitted into the royal presence; and the Czar enjoyed the terror this spectacle had inspired. This politic display of the strength of his empire produced the desired effect. The Tatars, penetrated with fear, no more dared to make their transient though deadly inroads into the centre of Russia. After giving an immense donative, and general entertainment to the army, he repaired to Moscow, where he was received by the people as a conqueror who had already effected their deliverance.

* Margeret, p. 8.

1599. On the day of his inauguration, which was celebrated with all imaginable splendour*, with a loud voice he invoked the Almighty Father during mass, to witness that, during his reign, none of his subjects should languish in want; and justly sensible how much rude imaginations are affected by forcible signs, he rent asunder his shirt and cried out he was ready to relinquish all his possessions, to the necessities of the unfortunate. It is not equally ascertained, whether the same impious hypocrisy impelled him to make the vow of abolishing all capital punishments; for during the subsequent part of his reign, in secret only was death administered to his boyars and people¹⁰.

The vices and crimes most opposite to true piety have been frequently tinged with the shades of superstition. In his fanatic zeal he squandered away immense sums on churches, enriched the monasteries, and undertook frequent pilgrimages. A fantastic and durable monument of his devotion is a "bell which he

* Levesque, tom. iii. p. 235—238. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 462.

¹⁰ See Margeret, p. 35.

¹¹ Fifty men, according to the evidence of an accurate traveller, might stand within this famous bell of Boris. See Carlisle Embassy, p. 138. The Empress Anne, however, eclipsed the piety of Boris, by casting a bell of the unparalleled

he cast of the enormous weight of two hundred and eighty-eight thousand pounds; and which is still we believe to be seen and admired in a tower of the Kremlin. Ten years before he had come to the throne, his only son "being attacked by a dangerous illness, was forced by his positive commands to drink cold holy water, and to be transported naked into the church, to their saint Basil, when the rigour of the season soon put a period to his life. This fact proves that he was really bewildered in all the mazes of absurd and odious superstition, or that he had the audacious irreverence to use the Christian religion as the engine of political tyranny and popular delusion.

Yet every reader, whose mind glows with the love of learning, and whose humanity deplores the horrors of barbarism, must applaud the zealous exertions of Boris to dispel that intellectual gloom which hung over his nation. His "laudable desire of emulating the enlightened projects of Ivan IV. led him to invite, from Germany and Eng-

leled weight of four hundred and thirty-two thousand pounds. See Coxe, *ubi supra*, vol. i. p. 322. The reader may see a description and engraving of this famous bell in Hanway's Travels.

¹² See Fletcher, p. 105.

¹³ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 239, 240.

land,

land, mathematicians, officers, physicians, and apothecaries⁴, and to grant them permission to

⁴⁴ How close the intimacy was between England and Russia in the reign of Boris, may be seen in the following curious letter of thanks which that monarch wrote to Elizabeth, for her offer of sending him over a young lady to match with some of his family.

♥Cotton MS. Nero—B. xi.

“ Through the tender mercye of God, whereby the daie spring from on high doth guyde our feet into the way of peace, the God in trinitie *we* praise for his mercie.

“ From the great Lo. King, and Great Duke Burrys Pherlorow^{eb}, of all Russia only upholder, of Volodemic, Mosco, Novogorode, King of Cazan, Astrachan, Lord of Volsko, and Great Duke of Smolensko, Otver, Ughery, Perme, Veatskey, Bolgarie, and other regions, Great Duke also of Novogorod in the lowe countries, Chernico, Razan, Pelotsko, Rostovelsky, Yearoslauley, Belozera, and all Leyussland, of Ustorskey, Coudinske, and commander of all the contrie of Syberia, and of the north part, and Lord over the contries of Verskey, Grumiskey, and King ov^r the contrey of Kabordinskey, Cherkaske, Duke over the contrey of Igor-skey, and ruler over many other kingdoms and dominions, our deare & loving sister, greeting.

“ To the right high and worthie Prince, our deare and loving sifter Elizabeth, by the Grace of God, Queen of England, France, and Ireland, and of many other contries.

“ Your ma^{ty}, our loving sister, hath sent unto us yo^r princely and kynde l^res, professing yo^r sifterly love and affection towards us, w^{ch} we have diligently perused and read, & doe most kyndlie conceive thereof.

“ And concerning y^e argum^t of your princely l^rs, it cannot but geve us an extraord^y contentm^t wee finding therein your Ma^{ty} love and affection towards us and o^r children, carefully endeavoring the matching and bestowinge of them in your owne lyne and race: by which yo^r letters
your

to exercise their own religious worship ; also
 sensible that the system of foreign education
 would

your highnes made knowne unto us, that amongst others you have made choise of a young Ladie, being a pure mayden, nobly descended by father & mother, adorned with graces & extraordinary guifts of nature, about xi yerres of age, of whom you make an offer unto us, that yf it be the pleasure of God to encline y^e hartes of the twoe yonge coople to like one of the other, all circumstances shall be accommodated on yo^r part, and that your princely desire is to knitt more and more, if it can bee, the mutual bonds of friendship as that no practize of others envie should have power to weaken or blemish the same.

“ Of w^{ch} ladie and others yo^r Ma^{tie} intended to send and rep^rsent unto us as many livelie images, as absence could afford, by a gentleman well qualified, & well trusted by you, who should frely & p^ticularly deal w^h us, in all things necessary for an affaire of this importance, wishing us to suspend from embracing any oth^r course in y^e kinde, till we have heard what yo^r Embassador (whom you purpose to sende) could saie in the matter. But yo^r Ma^{tie} hath y^erein not p^ticularly written unto us (of that wourthie ladie) what she is : wheth^r shee be of yo^r Highnes blood, descended of your Royall race, by yo^r father or mother, or from some other Archduke or Duke ; whereof we are desirous to be resolved, upon consideration of w^{ch} yo^r Ma^{tie} most kynde lres, wee Great Kinge & Great Duke Burris Phederowich of all Russia doe acknowledg our self much beholding unto you, that you o^r loving sist^r are pleased to make unto us so loving and free an offer, in this kynde, wherein il cannot be unknowne unto your Majestie that wee have byn moved and formerly dealt with all by divers other great princes, who have sent unto us with earnest entreatie to match with our children ; and in respect of our concept of your Majestie's good affection towards us, we doe rather and more willingly enclyne

would correct and improve that illiberal and austere temper which characterized his subjects, and enlarge the circumscribed sphere of their knowledge, he dispatched sixteen youths of noble origin on their travels, to open their minds to the arts, and sciences of civilized countries.

Five were entrusted to the magistrate of Lubec, the rest sought for improvement at the court of Charles the ninth, king of Sweden. And though no fire of original genius illuminated the land by their proficiency, yet it served to diffuse the spirit of inquiry through a wider extent, which by degrees led them to relish the productions of men of abilities.

clyne to your princely offer, than to the offer of any other great prince whatsoever.

“ And to that end, our desire is, that you our loving sister would be pleased before you doe send your Embassadour, to let us knowe howe this Ladie (purposed by your Majestie to be offred unto us in maryage) standeth allied to your Majestie, or otherwise from what Duke or Archduke she is descended: upon notice whereof, we shall apply ourself to resolve of the matter. And, in the miane tyme we will suspende the embracing any other course in this busynes, expecting with all expedition to be satisfied fullie by your Majestie herein. Written in our princely pallace in the cittie of Moskoe, in the yeare since the beginning of the world 711, and in the moneth of Aprille.”

At

At the close of this century, Boris more strikingly than ever displayed his taste for public magnificence, under the persuasion that it exalted the respect for majesty in the eyes of a rude people. The occasion was the visit of the brother of Christian king of Denmark, who from political motives sought an alliance with his daughter the princess Axenia. But the Danish prince, forty days after his arrival, fell a victim to his intemperance at a festival which was given by the Czar ¹⁵. 1600.

The Russian monarch was not to be oppressed by such a complication of misfortunes, partly brought on by events which no human wisdom could foresee, and partly by a spirit of animosity and division, as in the end shortened his days. Soon after the premature end of that prince, a most dreadful famine visited the capital of Russia. During the summer ¹⁶ of the first year of the century, rain fell in great abundance, and the ears of the corn, swelled by the moisture which nourished them, gave to the labourer the pleasing prospect of a rich harvest; but an unexpected frost checked the increasing ripeness of the grain. This portentous evil was slightly regarded by the giddy people, who saw the public granaries well 1601.

¹⁵ See Margaret, p. 34.

¹⁶ Muller apud Levesque, tom. iii. p. 247, 248.

filled with provision for the following winter; but when the frost-struck grain which they so absurdly employed to sow the lands yielded no produce, and the oats which they had sown in the spring to remedy this inconvenience rotted in the ground; then the scarcity became insupportable, then reigned the most
1602. dire mortality. Then outrages were committed that cannot be related without paralyzing the mind with horror. In the madness of hunger and despair, mothers destroyed their infants. In the face of day one woman, to appease the cravings of hunger, tore with her own teeth the flesh of her babe which she held in her arms; and this fruit of her womb would have inevitably been devoured, had not the people plucked it from her inhuman bosom. Four women who lodged together, for the nourishment of their starved bodies, enticed a peasant into their room, who was passing with a load of wood to sell. The moment their doors were closed they massacred him, killed the horse who carried the wood, and dragged the two bodies into their ice cellar. These furies being brought to justice, declared, that he was the third man¹⁷ who had been sacrificed to their phrensed appetites.

¹⁷ Margeret, p. 33, 34.

This unforeseen calamity Boris laboured to remedy, by daily distributing several thousand rubles for the subsistence of the poor of Moscow, and by compelling the nobles and bishops who had a superfluity of corn, to dispose of it to him in this time of want for half its value, that he might circulate it gratuitously to relieve the distress of his people". "To prolong this scene of misery and distress, where daily were seen old men, women, and children, stretching out their hands in speechless agony for sustenance, and expiring in the act; where the rites of sepulture were neglected, from the multitude of dead bodies which covered the streets; a band of robbers, infested openly, and with impunity, the highways to Moscow. Stationed at different quarters, they cut off all communications with the different parts of the state, and spread an universal alarm through the city. Their courage was effectually signalled by a victory over the troops that were sent to extirpate them; and before proper measures were taken to defeat them, they

" Tooke, vol. i. p. 307.—Margeret observes, whose writings betray no remarkable esteem for the character of Boris; "La somme que l'Empereur Boris disboursa pour ces pauvres est incroyable."

" Levesque, tom. iii. p. 251.

gave many fatal proofs of their prowess and cruelty.

When the court received the intelligence of their humiliating loss, a Voyevode immediately advanced at the head of a numerous and veteran army. The incendiaries, flushed with success, and strong in resources, were not in the least dismayed by his approach. Their chief, named Khlopko, was well fitted to lead on a set of desperate ruffians. The field of action was his pride; stern, active, and unforgiving, free from all restraints of humanity and justice, and never so much pleased as when employed in acts of rapine and cruelty. After arranging his men in military order, with impetuous violence he charged the enemy, and killed in the first attack the lieutenant of the Czar. Stung with shame, grief, and indignation at the death of their general, the soldiers of Boris renewed the fight with hearts burning for revenge. Roused by this last disgrace, they added rage to bravery, and bore down all before them. The freebooters fought like men who had been inured to enterprise and trained to war³⁰.

³⁰ Le Clerc impresses us with no mean opinion of the military talents of Khlopko, when he says, the troops which Boris sent against him were beaten in different engagements "quoiqu'elles fussent commandées par des hommes aguerris, Russes, Allemands, Polonois, Livoniens;" tom. ii. p. 464.

The success of the royal troops was not decisive until the greatest part of their antagonists were slaughtered. Khlopko alone was found lying among heaps of slain, overpowered by the loss of blood, and by the fatigue of his uncommon exertions. The few of his accomplices who survived this action, in their retreat to little Russia, were, in the end, taken and punished for their crimes²¹. Such was the fate of this furious banditti, and so favourable is the reign of an usurper to plunder and rebellion.

The provisions to the capital being no longer intercepted by this bold adventure of Khlopko, the injuries of this long and general famine were gradually repaired, and it was evident the policy of Boris wished to avoid the renewal of such a terrible scarcity, by his endeavours to revive the commercial intercourse which had formerly existed between the Hanseatic Towns and Russia. It has been asserted that upwards of six thousand lives²² were lost, in the city of Moscow alone, its population being so considerably augmented by the people, who poured in from

²¹ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 252.

²² Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 464, 465.

all parts to the capital, under the full expectation of finding immediate relief; nor were his measures less judicious to prevent a band of ruffians again crouding to the standard of rapine to spread misery and destruction in the heart of the empire.

In order to guard against the repetition of this last evil, and likewise to impress on the minds of his restless neighbours the habits of peace and the sentiments of veneration for his person, the politic Boris attached to his
 1603. service a considerable number of Lithuanian²³, Polish, and German officers, under whose auspices the science of tactics was introduced to the Russian army. The splendour of their uniforms, made after the fashion of their own country, and the pride he took in displaying them to the ambassadors of European princes, evince their ample possession of royal favour. With the same intention to procure internal quiet, he surrounded Smolensk with a wall of stone, as a place of shelter against the attacks of the Poles, and erected a town and fortress, which was called Borissova, after the name of its founder, to serve as a bulwark against the Tatars and Circassians²⁴.

²³ Lestique, tom. iii. p. 254.

²⁴ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 465.

But

But the peace and security enjoyed from these means were sullied by his private malice and public oppression; always the slave of jealousy and distrust, he esteemed it his duty to follow the slightest offence to his person and government with death. Those families who were odious from their virtues, or formidable from their power, were embroiled by his base contrivances in disputes, which generally led to their mutual destruction. When his artifices failed to involve them in discord, a hive²⁵ of informers, supported by his criminal bounty, became their accusers. When once these harpies had made their report, vain were all ideas of acquittal, though the proofs of innocence appeared in the most unquestionable shape. ²⁶A servant of the prince of Chestounof gave the first example of these infamous denunciations. Promotion to the rank of an infant boyar, and a considerable estate, were the rewards of this miscreant.

When guilt can plunder with impunity, and walk the streets adorned with marks of regal favour, her proselytes are innumerable. So rapid was the contagion of this

²⁵ See Williams's *Russia*, p. 55.

²⁶ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 255.

disease, that it became at last the custom for the servants of houses to meet at appointed places, and there to settle the wages of their iniquity, and the next victim of their accusation, with as much method and composure, as if it had constituted a part only of their domestic duty. Never were these accusations rejected²⁷; never did mercy suggest a doubt to ransom the groans of despair: and if the wronged master had the audacity to demand the evidence of his other domestics, like criminals they were put to the torture until they confirmed the slanderous declaration, or else their fidelity proved their destruction. Now tyranny exposed its shameless front, whilst subtilty passed for wisdom, impunity for virtue. Now came the time when it was dangerous to be honest, and only profitable to be wicked. In this calamitous period it seemed as if the Russians had entered into a sort of confederacy against all bonds of nature, since wives denounced their husbands, children their parents²⁸.

²⁷ Margeret, p. 35.

²⁸ "Moscou ne renferma plus que deux classes d'hommes, celle des calomniateurs, des delateurs de profession, et celle des accusés & des victims;"—the emphatic sentence of Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 456.

But

But among those who felt the persecuting spirit of Boris, none more interest our feelings than the house of Romanof, from the greatness of their virtues, and the lustre of their descent. The hatred of Boris to this illustrious family originated from their alliance to the late Czar on the maternal side, and from the conspicuous merits of its present chief, Fedor Nikititz Romanof²⁹.

A³⁰ brother of Fedor, named Alexander, had the charge of the *Cravtchei*: this office consisted in regulating the prince's household, and in inspecting the meats which were served to his table. A principal servant of Alexander's, linked with one of these crews of informers, sought out a kinsman of Boris, and declared to him he was ready to accuse his master, could any charge be devised against him. The relation of the Czar, to indulge his own malevolence, since it is the characteristic of envy to seek the ruin of that excellence it cannot attain, commanded the wretch to purchase at the markets some roots and poisonous plants, and place them privately in the chest of his master, and to inform him the instant his commission was fulfilled.

²⁹ See Strahlenberg, p. 205.

³⁰ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 257, 258.

This plan was executed with the utmost exactness. The whole family of Romanof were arrested, the herbs were produced to substantiate their guilt, and the Romanofs were accused of conspiring to poison the Czar. Publicly arraigned in presence of the patriarch, with no less astonishment than indignation, they beheld their servant appear against them as their accuser. Useless were all attempts of justification; since every effort to be heard was drowned by the clamorous shouts of a seduced, and consequently prejudiced people. They were condemned to exile, the most considerable of them were soon afterwards strangled, whilst the destructive rage of the tyrant involved in the same wreck every related chief who was conspicuous for his merit, fortune, or power³¹: and it is not to be supposed that the innocent author of their misfortunes could escape unmolested in this flagrant carnage. ³² Fedor Nikititz Romanof was transported to a monastery in the province of Archangel, and compelled to receive the monachal tonsure,

³¹ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 468.

³² It would be a difficult task for the most accommodating mind to reconcile the following assertion of Lacombe with historical truth: "Fedor Nikitch Romanow avoit quitté sa femme, par un zèle de devotion, il avoit ensuite embrassé l'état ecclésiastique," &c. Lacombe, p. 88.

under

under the name of Philaretus²²; a name which he afterwards rendered so conspicuous in the history of his country, by the firmness and wisdom of his plans to restore the greatness of the state after it had been almost ruined by a long scene of wild anarchy and foreign and domestic persecution. His wife, Axenia, was conveyed to a village on the borders of the Onega, and there forced to assume the name of Marpha, and the habit of a nun. Their son Michael, scarce six years old, was permitted to accompany his mother in her seclusion. He did not quit her till he was invested with the ensigns of royalty.

While the minds of men were thus agitated with the contending passions of rage and fear, while integrity was gone into exile, and the most flourishing virtues lopped off by the axe of oppression, a remarkable personage appeared on the political stage, who soon kindled a ferment among the people, ever prone to fickleness, split the nobles into different factions, and unthankfully revealed to the children of Boris the tremendous instability of human greatness.

²² See Coxé, vol. i. p. 349.

IN every form of government, credulousness and novelty may be regarded as the most frequent and dangerous maladies of the people. Every example, majestic from its antiquity, every institution beautiful from its justice, have been entirely forgotten in the calenture of these distempers. It is by means of inflaming these two ruling passions of the people, that ambitious men have succeeded in their most adventurous undertakings. These have been the pioneers who have marched forward to remove all impediments to their renown. These are the branches on which their expectations have been grafted. On such principles, is the revolution of the false Demetrius forged, organized, and cemented; a revolution which we are disposed to relate in a copious manner, as it gave birth to many curious and important events.

In the class of inferior nobility, known under the name of Infant Boyars, one of their order named Otopief, an inhabitant of Galvitch, was the father of two sons, Smirnoi and Bogdan. According to the opinion of many historians, the latter of these had the honour of producing the hero of our narrative, who received at the baptismal fount
the

the name of James¹: at an early age he was sent to Moscow for the liberal purposes of education; to write, to read, and to translate the scriptural writings into the ancient Slavonic dialect, which scarcely differed at that period from the vulgar tongue, were intellectual accomplishments which the few only acquired, and which ignorance revered with stupid admiration.

The young Jacho was soon discovered to be endowed with a memory capacious and retentive, an imagination bold and versatile, and a judgment acute, penetrating and decisive. His superiors, ambitious to enrich their fraternity with such promising talents, gave him at the age of fourteen the monastic habit². The name of the monastery is undetermined in which he was first initiated into his religious avocations. Jacho was now called Gregory or Griska, as the usage of the Greek church requires the assumption of another name on embracing the ecclesiastical life.

His social though restless temper in a short space of time introduced him into a variety of religious houses. At last he revisited Moscow, and was there consecrated deacon

¹ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 260.

² Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 470.

in the monastery of Tchudof. The fame of his literary qualifications attracted even the attention of the patriarch Job. In his palace he was employed in the laborious, and at that time important, office of transcribing books¹. The useful and elegant art of printing brought into Russia by the Czar Ivan was still in its infancy. An expert copyist therefore, while the press continued to furnish but a few books, might command the respect and patronage of an illiterate clergy.

The period was now rapidly approaching when his strong and active genius commenced a new and momentous labour, in every respect more pleasing and suitable to his abilities. Induced equally from inclination and opportunity to mix in a large society at Moscow, his fancy was uncommonly struck by the remark of some people who had known the Czarovitz Demetrius, that he bore a strong resemblance to that unfortunate prince. With a mind heated by these observations, and by an habitual impulse of hope, he sketched, in the opinion of historians, the outlines of that great and arduous project, which was afterwards to conduct him to the throne of Russia. After he had artfully collected every informa-

¹ In the Report of a massacre at Moscow, Lond. 1607, it is said, "that he served in the patriarch's court as a singing man and musician."

tion most conducive to the success of his designs, and which was peculiarly facilitated from his advantageous situation, he boldly announced himself to his friends as the long lost prince Demetrius; doubtless building hopes of success on a well-grounded confidence in his own arrangements, in the confused state of affairs, so propitious to innovation, and on the blind credulity of the multitude. On his first declaration, no flattering views presented themselves of realizing his future greatness; even his warmest friends derided his pretensions; whilst none but the unthinking accredited, or the turbulent supported his extraordinary assertions.

The pretensions of Gregory however were not so little noticed but that they came to the ears of the metropolitan of Rostof. This prelate had uniformly manifested a deep-rooted antipathy to him from the time he was placed in the palace of the patriarch. We are ignorant whether it proceeded from the intriguing physiognomy of the young deacon, or from the more justifiable cause of his irregular behaviour*.

Notwithstanding the patriarch was deaf to all his remonstrances concerning Gregory, yet he did not relinquish his design of per-

* Levesque, tom. iii. p. 261. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 472.

secuting the object of his aversion. Without delay he addressed himself to the Czar, yet even he, who was so susceptible of distrust, and so insensible to compassion, did not reduce Gregory to a state of absolute despair and confinement. Instead of gratifying the wishes of the metropolitan with his death, he ordered one of his secretaries, whose name was Vassilief, to remove him to a distant monastery, under the observance of a rigid superior; far from suspecting the most fatal enemy of his repose and power to exist in the person of this young monk.

Vassilief paid but a slight attention to the order of the prince. He committed it to one of his colleagues connected with Gregory by family ties; the sentence therefore was not executed with prompt dispatch or scrupulous rigour. From the representations of his kinsman, Gregory perceived that every hour increased his danger; all his schemes of future dominion now rested on a precipitate retreat. With ease he found a secure asylum in the different monasteries of Galitch, Mourom, and Brianski. The reception of Gregory in these several houses betrays at this time the relaxed state of discipline in the convents, whilst his flight incontestibly proves that the intercourse of the monarch with his principal cities

cities was formed and maintained with no care or attention.

The designs of Gregory or Otopief now required, that with all possible expedition he should direct his wandering steps towards Poland. For in this country he is expected to realize a plan, which in boldness of design, could be exceeded only by the cunning with which it was managed. From Brianski he stopped at Novgorod-Severski, in the Spaski-Monastir. The archimandrite gave him a kind reception and a lodging in his own cell⁵. There occurred no difficulties in persuading a superior so accommodating and unsuspicious that he had relations who resided in the city of Poultimel. The prior, with a condescending kindness, not only permitted him to visit his friends, but supplied him with provisions, a horse, and a guide. Otopief was accompanied by two other monks, vagrants like himself, and to whom, no doubt, he had imparted the motives of his journey. Before his departure, his gratitude or his pride, impelled him to leave, in the cell of the prior, a note couched in these terms:⁶ "I am the Czavoritz Demetrius, and when I mount on the throne of my ancestors, to recompense

⁵ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 262, 263, 264.

⁶ Williams's Russia, p. 56.

your kindness shall be among the first of my duties". The three adventurers took the road to Kief, which city, at that time, acknowledged the jurisdiction of Poland.

Graceful in his person, insinuating in his address, and distinguished from the vulgar herd, by a peculiar air of dignity, the wily impostor had obtained the knowledge of men and manners, which was far more beneficial to the prosecution of his schemes, than all the principles of science, or the polished systems of philosophy. By this, he acquired the favour and esteem of the prince Vassili Ostrojski, governor of Kief for the king of Poland; who appointed him to discharge the duties of deacon in his palace, and placed him in the celebrated monastery Petcherski. But Otopief was gifted with a temper too convivial not to transgress the austere regulations of his order. It was soon discovered that he indulged his appetite in meat⁷, a crime the most heinous that a monk of the Greek rite could commit: his superior wished to

⁷ M. Rochelle, in his romantic History, bestows on him every mental and personal qualification, p. 15, 16. More authentic writers however agree that he was distinguished by the elegance of his figure, and the speciousness of his manners. See Tooke, vol. i. p. 309, 310.; A Brief Historical Relation of the Empire of Russia, p. 15.; Russian Impostor; and along list of other authorities.

⁸ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 472.

punish him, his protector abandoned him; whilst their intentions only served to accelerate the execution of his schemes. With a celerity which baffled all hopes of pursuit, he fled from the monastery, entered Poland, and then immediately stripped off his monastic attire. His copious memory, his happy genius, and uninterrupted application, soon enabled him to speak with ease and elegance the Polish tongue, a competent knowledge of which was so absolutely necessary for the promotion of his designs.

He now sought to gain the friendship of some men of high birth and distinguished consequence, whose zeal for the propagation of his cause and support of his character, might firmly establish his credit and authority with the people. But his first endeavours to acquire the notice of the great wore a very unfavourable aspect. Introduced to the prince Adam Wiefnovitski, he saw himself confounded among the domestics of a great household. Irritated rather than discouraged by this unexpected disgrace, he at last executed a plan, which amply atoned for the ill success of his past attempts.

* It is now essentially necessary to relate

* Mr. Coxe, in the second volume of his Northern Tour, p. 2. has given us, in a valuable note, the opposite testimonies of Muller and Petreus on this mysterious event.

diffusely

diffusely the discordant accounts of the several writers concerning the death of the Czarovitz Demetrius, as they enable us to observe the many concurring circumstances which favoured the deception of Otropief, and on what plausible grounds he alleged his pretensions to royal descent.

It may be remembered that the infant Demetrius was one of the personages in the reign of Fedor, marked out for destruction by the cruel policy of Boris. A nobleman named Clechnin was the chief instrument used by Boris to take him off. Clechnin also reckoned on the assistance of the secretary of state Bitiagovski, whose domains lying contiguous to Uglitz, the residence of Demetrius, furnished them with the pretext of stopping there without suspicion. But to insure the accomplishment of his designs, he engaged twelve others in the conspiracy: yet the most useful of these assassins was an old governante of the Czarovitz, named Volkhova, and her son Danilo.

Bitiagovski soon arrived at Uglitz, charged with an order of the court to inspect the domestic concerns of the Czarina. In the house of this princess he exercised the most tyrannical authority, lessened her revenues, deprived her brothers of liberty, and demanded from them at all times the most unqualified

qualified submission. To seize the young prince by surprize was the object of this behaviour. But the empress, apprehensive of the stroke which menaced her, scarce ever allowed herself a necessary repose from the anxiety of maternal tenderness. At last, exhausted by incessant watching, she had the misfortune one day to fall into a heavy sleep after dinner. Volkhova did not neglect this critical moment; she conducted the Czaro-vitz into the court, under the pretence of her son's amusing his mind with infantine sports. Danilo, worthy of his horrible mother, was the first to strike the young prince, whilst the other assassins soon buried their daggers in his body¹⁰.

This shocking event happened on the fifteenth of May, one thousand five hundred and ninety-one, in the open face of day, according to the statement of Russian chronicles. Whilst foreign writers affirm, that this political stroke was given during the night, by which means another victim was substituted in the room of the prince. The influence and intrigues of Boris have however placed this event in the most impenetrable obscurity.

¹⁰ Levesque is the most circumstantial of any historian in his account of this tragical affair. See the reign of Fedor, p. 221—226. *Histoire de Russie*, tom. iii.

were transported to a colony at Pelym, a new erected city of Siberia ; whilst the bodies of the real authors of his death were dragged from the ditch into which they had been cast by the rage of the populace, and honourably interred.

The plan of Otopief was therefore admirably accommodated to cajole the people, who are ever fond of things new and wonderful¹³. He composed a memorial in which he declared himself to be the Czarovitz Demetrius. That the assassins suborned by Boris, in the blindness of their zeal, had only destroyed the son of a priest¹⁴; that, a long time concealed by the fidelity of some boyars, he remained in humble tranquillity ; but at last, fearful of being discovered by the numerous emissaries of Boris, and ignorant of a secure asylum in the dominions of the usurper, he was obliged to seek a retreat in Poland. And he should think himself in some measure compensated for the unkindness of his past fortune, if, in the most abject state, he could preserve a life, which was there constantly threatened by the persecuting rage of Boris.

¹³ “ La natura de popoli è desiderosa di cose nuove,” says the Prince of Italian historians Guiccardini in his *Historia d’Italia*. Ven. 1592. lib. xiv. p. 403.

¹⁴ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 265, 266. See likewise Russian Impostor, p. 16.

It is not improbable, had this story been propagated by his own voice, that he would have failed in captivating the minds of his countrymen, or in drawing to his party a crowd of infatuated adherents. But he managed to exhibit this paper in a manner which soon aroused the attention of all ranks of men. He¹³ counterfeited an illness in which he appeared to shew the symptoms of an approaching death; and then demanded a confessor; when the priest arrived, he found him with his visage pale, his eyes haggard, his breast panting, and with a voice so faint as to be almost incapable of articulating his words. After appearing to make many painful but fruitless efforts to confess himself, the impostor at last summoned up sufficient strength to conjure the priest to bury him with all the honours due to the son of the Czar, informing him, that after his death, he would find under his mattress, the story of his life, which he entreated him not to disclose, until his care-worn soul had emitted its last sigh.

The good priest, amazed at the uncommon importance of his secret, was for a long time lost in profound and anxious thought. On

¹³ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 473.

the one hand, the dread of betraying a religious confidence bound him to silence; on the other hand, the compassion he felt to behold a person of such great dignity exposed to the utmost state of want and distress, induced him to disregard the injunctions of Otopief. After remaining a considerable time in suspense, the result of his deliberations proved according to the expectations of the impostor, that his benevolence, in conjunction with his curiosity, would tempt him to forfeit his promises of secrecy. With a celerity therefore proportionate to the importance of this affair, he ran to the prince Wiefnovitski, to relate every particular of this singular occurrence¹⁶.

The astonished nobleman, on receiving this information, hastened to the chamber of Otopief to clear up the mystery of this singular affair. But all his pressing entreaties could not however prevail on the impostor to reveal his secret; his curiosity thus being only more worked up to the highest pitch by this positive and well-timed denial, he forced the confessor to search for the manuscript, which having found and perused with the most scrupulous care, he approached the hypocrite with all that reverence which kingly power de-

¹⁶ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 266, 267.

mands. Then Otopief, with inimitable art, pretending no longer to be actuated by any fears of revealing his secret, displayed, as a new and incontrovertible testimony of his royal origin, a golden cross set with the valuable diamonds, which had been given him on the day of baptism by his renowned relative the prince Mstislavski".

Thus were his projects raised from fordid poverty and dependence to an opulent grandeur by this masterly invention, and thus the bold impostor soon recovered that health which was never seriously impaired. Inspired also with an opinion that he should still move in a more illustrious sphere, he not only devoted his leisure to the acquirement of some of those elegances of literature which polish and enlarge the mind, but also to the cultivation of those studies¹⁷ which instruct princes to sway even an absolute power with wisdom and virtue.

Nevertheless his mind was not wholly absorbed by these honourable pursuits, as to neglect paying an unwearied attention to the advancement of his original views. By the charms of his conversation and the elegance

¹⁷ Russian Impostor, p. 19. The author of this history is not supported by any good authority, when he says that this cross was the gift of his mother.

¹⁸ See Muller apud Coxe, vol. ii. p. 9.

of his person¹⁹, he obtained the esteem and affection of the brother of his protector, Constantine Wiefnovitski. This connection procured him the friendship of George Mnishek, the palatine of Sandomir, and father-in-law to Constantine; a man no less weighty from his fortune than dignified by his station, and formidable by his power and credit with the diet²⁰.

The fruits of his second marriage was a daughter, called Marina. The beauty of this remarkable woman could only be equalled by her vanity, her boldness, by her cunning. Hurried on by the wildest extravagancies, from a restless ambition, and fancying that in the person of Otopief existed the lawful heir of the throne of Russia, she began seriously to meditate on the means of captivating his heart, in order to advance herself to glory and dominion. Otopief soon discerned the flattering overtures of Marina, and he answered them with all that respectful gallantry which soon softens and subdues even the most obdu-

¹⁹ Levesque, tom. ii. p. 268, 269. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 475, 476. The author of the Russian Impostor, who holds the balance of his faults and merits with a tolerably steady and impartial hand, tells us, "that he had an understanding above his age, and a presence so agreeable that he seldom or never lost ground where he had room to act his part;" p. 26.

²⁰ Coxe, vol. ii. p. 4.

rate of the female sex. By thus rendering himself propitious to the views of Marina, he saw that his avarice could be gratified by the influence of permanent wealth, and his amorous inclinations by the possession of a woman, whom the bounteous hand of nature is said to have adorned with the most incomparable personal attractions²¹.

When the palatine perceived the first openings of their mutual affections, dazzled with the chimerical ideas of his future greatness, he also soon entertained the most sanguine hopes of beholding Otopief invested with the supreme power in Russia. Agreeably to such expectations, he gave every possible encouragement to their passion. Yet²² in the transports of his joy for the brilliant fortune of his daughter, he still had the prudence to insist on their nuptials being postponed, until Otopief should receive on the throne the congratulations of his subjects²³: to this condition the impostor readily acquiesced, for

²¹ Brereton, in his History of the Wars and Miseries of Russia, Lond. 1614, calls them "the most perfect and absolute frames of nature, that lived at that time in that part of the world;" chap. ii. p. 6.

²² See Russian Impostor, p. 36, 37—40.

²³ Lacombe, p. 66.

he had too deeply studied the character of the palatine, not to feel perfectly assured that he would now be animated with the most ardent zeal in support of his cause.

The momentous time pregnant with hope, doubt, and apprehension, was now advancing, in which his extraordinary pretensions were to be ushered into the world, strengthened by royal countenance, or to be consigned into perpetual ignominy and oblivion. The diet of Poland opened in the year one thousand six hundred and three; thither the bold Mnishkek, relying on his powerful interest, conducted the false Demetrius. In the midst of this splendid and thronged assembly, in the presence of their sovereign Sigismund III. the audacious impostor expatiated with apparent indignation and grief on his innumerable sufferings; and to heighten the effect of his narrative, tears gushed repeatedly from his eyes, as if overcome by the monstrous injustice which his tender years had suffered. The nobles heard him with compassion²⁴ and regard; though their partiality did not lead them to renounce the treaty of peace which the republic of Poland had so lately concluded with the Russian state.

²⁴ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 270. Coxe, vol. ii. p. 4.

The king however declared, that as he had pledged his word to the strict observance of this peace, it could not be openly infringed. Nevertheless he freely permitted his grandees, who were prepossessed in favour and touched with the misfortunes of the Czarovitz, to espouse in their own name the cause of injured majesty; emphatically assuring them that his most hearty wishes of success would accompany their enterprize. And, to confirm the truth of these assertions, he immediately assigned to the intended son-in-law of Mnishkek a retinue suitable to his pretended birth, bestowed on him several magnificent presents, and received him at all times with marks of distinguished friendship.

If the reports of the times may be accredited, this generosity of Sigismond originated from the most sinister motives; for it has been strenuously maintained that the false Demetrius promised to bestow on him the city of Smolensk with its extensive dependences, and all the north of the fertile Ukraine, as recompences worthy of his gratitude, and of the king's acceptance.

But an article of this dubious contract, the most repugnant to every principle of public interest, was the promise of reuniting the

russian to the catholic church²⁵, as the attempt to violate their religious rites must inevitably have carried misery and bloodshed throughout the empire. But supposing these conditions to be established on the solid basis of truth, Otopief was too well versed in deceit, to be destitute of arguments to satisfy his conscience in breaking an agreement, to which he had never perhaps consented but with reluctance.

The dark cloud now gathering in Poland was soon to burst on the head of Boris. A rumour prevailed which quickly grew into credit at Moscow, that the youngest son of the late Ivan was alive and discovered in Poland²⁶. On the first intelligence of this new phenomenon, the credulous vulgar swallowed the imposture without any farther inquiry; whilst thinking men and others who were distinguished for their birth, services, and power, made it the subject of their general conversation. In the leaven of different re-

²⁵ Mr. Tooke and the author of the Russian Impostor, two respectable authorities, declare his attachment to the Romish rites, and his promise to the Roman pontiff, when mounted on the Russian throne, to signalize his zeal in the establishment of the Catholic church. *Russ. Imp.* p. 41; *Hist. of Russia*, vol. i. p. 309. See also the Report of a Massacre at Moscow.

²⁶ See Olearius, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 265.

ports which pervaded the whole mass of the people, the unwelcome story reached the tyrant; who, for the first time, trembled upon his throne, cemented by blood and assassination. Sensible of the national fondness of the people for the blood of their ancient rulers²⁷, and knowing that neither threats nor persuasions could check the desperate, secure the wavering, nor inspire the disaffected, should the impostor have the art to varnish over the most imperfect parts of his history with the semblance of truth, he saw himself on the brink of ruin, if the most vigorous and subtle measures were not immediately adopted to counteract his projects. His first grand object was to ascertain, beyond all doubt and controversy, the true pedigree of this wonderful person; since no surmise of his real birth had yet been formed, nor any contradiction been given to the prevailing opinion. With this view he dispatched an emissary into Poland, who had the good fortune to accomplish the purpose of his journey without detection. From him he learnt, to his astonish-

²⁷ We must commend the discernment of Mr. Williams when he ascribes the causes of the various revolutions in the Russian state to the blind attachment of the people to the family of their ancient sovereigns, p. 339. Indeed much soundness of remark is to be found in the whole chapter, as he has chosen entirely to divest himself of his prejudices.

ment,

ment, that this formidable rival was no other than the young deacon Gregory Otropief²⁸.

The darts of affliction carry with them a double force when they come unexpected. What rage, anguish, and astonishment, must have been depicted in the countenance of the Czar, in the first moment of a discovery so unexpected! for amidst the multiplicity of his great avocations, he had entirely lost all recollection of the obscure monk, whom Vassilief had ordered to be placed under the eye of a more rigid superior. How mortifying then to the proud mind of the usurper, first to be encompassed with the terror of foreign invasion from this vagrant upstart, and to feel every hope of safety rest solely on his own vigilance, steadiness, and resolution! The first person who deplored the folly of his furious resentment was the secretary Vassilief, whose undesigned negligence now occasioned him such serious inquietude. Deter-

²⁸ Olearius informs us that Boris offered a large sum of money for the apprehension of the false Demetrius, dead or alive, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 265. and Mr. Tooke adds, "that he sent out assassins in quest of the pretended Dmtri, with orders to kill him," vol. i. p. 310. Such a conduct must compel those who are the least attached to the cause of Demetrius to acknowledge, that he inwardly did not dispute the existence of the prince Demetrius, or that he dreaded, on this mysterious personage asserting his claims to the throne, a fickle people would no longer tolerate the guilt of his usurpation.

mined,

mined to revenge his carelessness, Boris contrived however to cloak his punishment under the appearance of public equity, fearful, should he even pronounce the name of the impostor, it would confer on him an additional importance in the already fluctuating minds of the people. Without listening therefore to the dictates of humanity or justice, the secretary received his death from the knout for imputed malversations concerning some money committed to his special care and management.

When the news reached Stockholm that that a pretended Czarovitz had appeared in Poland, Charles IX., King of Sweden, sent an immediate tender of his services to the Czar. Boris, however, in a manner most suitable to his dignity, refused the proffered aid, determined, whatever might be the consequences, to seek no foreign succour in the preservation of his power and life²⁹; nevertheless by one fatal command, which he thought would have crushed the conspiracy in the bud, the cause of the impostor acquired such permanent advantage as never could be remedied by all his future exertions; instead of remaining in an apparent state of inaction,

²⁹ Levesque, tom. ii. p. 271, 272.

as if his authority was too strong to be shaken by the most daring schemes of Otopief, he imprudently ordered, under pain of death, the troops spread in the principality of Smolensk to cut off all communication with Poland³⁰ at this dangerous juncture; such a proceeding the people immediately interpreted into palpable symptoms of fear, and into a plain confession of his weakness; by which means the spirit of revolt became more ripe, and the malcontents more bold and insolent.

The next and less exceptionable proceeding was to lay open the whole life, descent, and adventures of Otopief, before the king of Poland, and to expostulate with him on account of the protection which was offered in his territories to so barefaced an impostor. With this intent he dispatched to the Polish court an infant boyar and a monk, who had been the familiar companions of Otopief. But Sigismund, from his great share in the stake, had no inclination to be undeceived. Far therefore from granting them audience, the only favour, or rather mercy they could obtain, consisted in an easy death. Their fate could not however deter the Czar from sending Smirnoi Otopief, the uncle of the impostor,

³⁰ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 474. This timid and fatal policy is also noticed by Tooke, vol. i. p. 310.

into

into Poland. His mission was attended with a similar disappointment²¹; though he had the secret consolation to retire without being sacrificed to the fears or suspicions of his nephew.

In this season of approaching tumult and public distraction, when the wise and moderate looked forward with a deep anxiety for their own and the general welfare, when the minds of the guilty and vain were bent on the most fantastic prospects, and all who were bankrupts in fame and fortune were bent on embroiling the state; the patriarch and clergy, to revive the drooping spirits of the monarch, sent their deputation into Poland, in the hope that it would be received and treated with all possible respect and attention; but in this idea they were greatly deceived. In the person of their ambassador Poltichof they saw the law of nations violated; he was thrown into the prison of Kief by the orders of the identical prince Ostrojski²², whose superstition had been so lately shocked at the loose behaviour of the monk Otopief, in the convent of Petcherski, but who now, like other politicians, shifted his conduct according to the changes of the

²¹ Russian Impostor, p. 47.

²² Levesque, tom. iii. p. 273—275.

impostor's external circumstances. So transient among weak minds becomes the passion of hatred, so soon is it dismayed and softened into the tone of fawning adulation, when its object rises to unforeseen greatness.

With augmenting strength, the impatience and ambition of the impostor also augmented. The most indefatigable exertions were now made by himself, the palatine, and the other Polish nobles who had espoused his cause, to place the Russian diadem on his head by violence of arms : and fortune smiled propitious on their first attempts. The Cossacks of the Don, a restless, bold, and refractory people, averse to the inflexible rigour of Boris, who, much against their inclination, was taming them to the yoke of a more exact discipline³³ than they had hitherto been accustomed to, no sooner learnt that Poland contained the lawful heir of Russia, than they commissioned Koréla their Hetman, and other chiefs of distinguished credit, to tend him their homage. He was found by these deputies, busied in warlike preparations against Russia ; whilst the disciplined troops, which the most considerable of the Polish nobility had attached to his cause, impressed these barbarians with a

³³ Tooke, vol. i. p. 310.

vereneration for his person and a respect for his court. Nor can it surprise us that they should implicitly accredit the story of their new master to whom they had sworn allegiance, as the real son of Ivan, when his title was acknowledged by men of such conspicuous rank, and far their superiors in judgment.

Whether the seeds of discontent were already germinated in the army, or that their fears had damped their alacrity, Boris, before he had covered his frontiers with sufficient troops, received intelligence that his high-spirited and active rival was rapidly advancing to Tchernigof, with an army of four thousand Poles³⁴. The Kniaz Ivan Tatief commanded this place; a loyal, resolute, and active man; and whose determination; consistent with his character, was to hold out to the last extremity; but an insurrection among his troops and the populace defeated this honourable design; and he had the mortification to make his appearance in chains before the impostor, whose pretensions were recog-

³⁴ Coxe, vol. ii. p. 5. The well-informed Margeret, p. 35. says, that he entered Russia "avec environ quatre mille hommes;" while other writers, less supplied with authentic materials, swell the account to twenty-four thousand horse, and to more than twenty thousand Poles. See a Brief Historical Relation of the Empire of Russia, p. 14. Le Czar Demetrius, p. 342.

nized by the town with an oath of fidelity. This example was followed by seven other cities²⁵. Thus, without drawing his sword²⁶, Otopief became master of the frontiers.

The fame of this great success quickly spread into Poland. His army was soon swelled by a crowd of adventurers, eager to profit in the spoils of Russia. With these new recruits, he appeared under the walls of Novgorod Severski, with the full confidence of being offered the homage and services of the people. But he presently discovered that one spirit and one mind actuated this town. The people were faithful, the troops disciplined, and their leader Basmanof²⁷ courageous: compelled to form the siege according to the rules of science, the besiegers were harassed by their frequent and fortunate sallies. A considerable army, raised under the immediate inspection of the Czar, now also took the field against the bold and subtle rebel, but they only met to retreat to Sevlk with confusion and disgrace. Thither they were quickly pursued by the false Czarovitz

²⁵ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 479.

²⁶ The victorious impostor might have repeated, with a feeling satisfaction, this sentence of the sage Guiccardini: "*Niuna vittoria essere piu utile, piu preclare, piu gloriosa che quella, che s'acquista senza danno, & senza sangue de' suoi soldati.*" Hist. d'Italia, lib. xv. p. 456.

²⁷ Russian Impostor, p. 46.

who

who would have reaped the honours of a second triumph, if the Russians had not been timely reinforced by a strong band under the command of Vassili Ivanovitz Chouiski. This prince, who had so lately degraded himself by his behaviour to the inhabitants of Uglitz, was of a temper admirably calculated to wade through this scene of tumult, bloodshed, and civil commotion; for his savageness of heart never permitted the vigour of his arm to be relaxed by any movements of compassion in peace or war. Overpowered by this fresh torrent of troops, who encompassed him on all sides, the gallant impostor still however rejected all idea of retreat, until six or eight¹⁶⁰⁵ thousand of his men were either killed or taken prisoners, and thirty pieces of his cannon had proclaimed the decisive victory of the enemy. He then retired with his feeble remnant of forces towards Poultimel, supported by a mind firm and undaunted in this hour of difficulty and danger.

Instead of spreading slaughter and consternation among the scanty and exhausted troops of the impostor, by an immediate pursuit, the Russians loitered away their time in culpable repose, well pleased with their imaginary con-

¹⁶⁰⁵ Coxe, vol. ii. p. 5. Margaret, p. 36, 37. Rochelle, p. 356.

quest; yet even this negligence might have been retrieved, had they directed their first attack against the valiant rebel; but motives of revenge counterbalanced their interest; to exterminate the commander and inhabitants of an insignificant city, called Rylsk, they deemed objects of far more consequence than the destruction of a man who joined to the virtues of courage and patience all that popular address to win the favour of the people, and all the daring and unconquerable ambition of never losing sight of his great object the throne. Bent on this inglorious warfare, they saw on their approach to the place, the most judicious preparations of defence; whilst the citizens from the battlements rent the air with the unwelcome sounds of their firm determination to die in support of the Czarovitz Demetrius. The generals of Boris, who, in their vain confidence of superior strength, had devoted this paltry town to inevitable destruction, were compelled, after five days' perseverance³⁹, to measure back their steps without even the honour of having molested them in a skirmish.

The Czar changed his general, but not his fortune. To Fedor Cheremetief he entrusted the siege of Kromy, occupied by six thousand

³⁹ Margaret, p. 37.

Cosacks, and the chief partizans of his opponent. Cheremetief reduced the fortress to ashes. But in his attempts to seize the city by assault, and to make his way through the scattered ruins, he was defeated by the intentional misconduct of his officers. The artillery was unfortunately placed in the hands of a Michael Soltikof, who abandoned his post in the most treacherous manner, whilst the Cosacks, with a courage sharpened by revenge and despair⁴⁰, threw themselves on the besiegers, who pusillanimously fled, unmindful of their martial glory. To increase their misfortunes, an epidemical disease raged among the troops. After many delays and consultations, they received from Moscow the medicines prescribed by the physicians of the court. They were administered without any care or caution; and the thinking few will perhaps discover no uncharitable spirit in the supposition that the remedy must have proved no less fatal than the disorder⁴¹.

⁴⁰ Ten several times (the words of the author of the Russian impostor) did the Russians assault Krom, and were as often repelled by the obstinate valour of the Cosaques, p. 62.

⁴¹ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 277, 278.

The flame of rebellion now spread itself to the capital; all classes of men turned their looks towards the new claimant with strong indications of favour: but as the people in any convulsion of the state are always the most presumptuous, stubborn, and intractable, their views not extending to remote consequences, Boris thought if their fiery passions could be once silenced, the general progress of disaffection would soon be terminated. After having revolved on many plans with a singular quickness, for the perilous posture of affairs admitted of no delay; he commanded the patriarch, (to whom the untaught rabble as yet shewed the greatest reverence,) and the prince Ivan Vassili Chouski (who could produce such authentic evidence of the death of the young prince) to parade the streets and market-places, for the purpose of quieting the minds of the people by the positive assurance that the real Demetrius had long since perished, while the usurper of his name was the notorious Gregory Otropief, monk of the Tschudor monastery; and the more to complete this master-stroke of policy, he called in the aid of the grand apparatus of religious vengeance. The impostor and his accomplices, with all imaginable solemnity, were excommunicated in the presence of the people.

people⁴². Nor can we read with surprise, that this sentence should chill their minds with superstitious awe, when ambition, invested with the ensigns of sovereignty, after trampling on the majesty of human laws, laying cities in flames, and thinning the land by its destructive sword, has been stopped in its victorious career, dismayed by the thunder of the dire anathema.

The deceitful calm which hung over the city, the effect of the dread interdict, was however soon succeeded by an unforeseen event, which once more kindled the latent sparks of sedition into a destructive blaze. Boris, rising from his table, was suddenly attacked with the most excruciating pains⁴³. On feeling the approach of death, he hastened to assume the monastic habit; when, after a

⁴² Levesque, tom. iii. p. 279. Tooke, vol. i. p. 310. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 481. Coxe, vol. ii. p. 6.; and Gordon's History of Russia, &c. Aberd. 1755. vol. i. p. 43.

⁴³ It is the opinion of several writers, that he poisoned himself on seeing the near prospect of a revolution. Muller apud Coxe, vol. i. p. 402.; Russian Impostor, p. 58.; Lacombe, p. 66.; Strahlenberg, 206.; St. Lazare, in his Remarques d'Histoire, Par. 1632. p. 87.; Rochelle, p. 365.; Tooke, vol. i. p. 313. Williams's Russia, p. 58.—a respectable body of evidence, but to which cannot be added the authoritative names of Levesque and Margeret, the former of whom seems to insinuate, that, his death was a decay of nature; while the latter asserts, that he died of an apoplexy, Histoire de Russie, tom. iii. p. 270., Etat de l'empire de Russie, p. 37.

short illness, he died in the seventh year of a stormy reign, a sad example of the small satisfaction which an ambitious mind finds in the illegal possession of supreme power.

AFTER his death he was succeeded by his son Fedor, scarce sixteen years old, who was solemnly proclaimed by the patriarch, the boyars, and nobles, who were present at Moscow'. But a youth of his experience could ill control a people, whose headstrong fury was not to be restrained by the mature wisdom of Boris. His ministers however were dextrous in their application to business, and distinguished by their services to the house of Godounof. But the people taking advantage of the general confusion, led them into measures at once mischievous and incurable. Indeed, to have guided the helm with prudence and success in these tempestuous times, required a single leader, whose mind must have been gifted with counsels always seasonable, and always adequate, and who must have displayed that prompt dispatch, and vigorous discipline, and possessed that military reputation which could alone

' Coxe, vol. ii. p. 6.

have made an uncivilized and seditious age unanimous.

The last link of political union now burst asunder. Doubt began to reign among all hearts: in vain² did the archbishop of Novgorod transport himself to the army lying before Kromy to stimulate their exertions; for in all their show of allegiance, there dwelt nothing at the bottom but repugnance and irresolution. The inhabitants sought to investigate the sentiments of the army; the chiefs, the disposition of the cities: the result of these frequent messages demonstrated that the least commendable motives had prevailed. The cities of Toula, Riazan, and Cochire, were among the first to acknowledge Demetrius for their sovereign³. Basmanof himself⁴, although he had so lately exhibited a most glorious instance of fidelity in his defence of the city of Novgorod-Severski, infected with the general contagion, revolted to the cause of the rebel. The two princes Golitzin, and others of the same rank, followed his example. One of them, with all the low cunning of a dastardly mind, contrived to be presented to the impostor loaded with chains, thinking by this contemptible ma-

² Levesque, tom. iii. p. 284.

³ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 483.

⁴ Russian Impostor, p. 65.; Margeret, p. 39.

nœuvre his association would be deemed compulsory, should the adverse party be restored by the fickleness of fortune to their former strength and independence.

Thus elevated by this sudden change from the depth of despair to the height of prosperity, the false Czarovitz, no longer dubious of final success, appeared himself to this new and impatient army. The most faithful adherents of the royal party fled to Moscow⁵ on this general conspiracy; whilst the rest came forwards to receive him with all possible marks of respect. The army resounded with acclamations on his arrival. In person he visited the camp of the besieged, composed of an hundred thousand men, who, with seventy pieces of cannon, had vainly attempted, for the space of three whole months, to demolish a city by no means impregnable from its natural means of defence. The long and obstinate resistance of this town against the hostile engines of such an immense army must more decisively convince the reader of discernment, than all the laboured deductions of reason, that the talents of the intrepid impostor amply equalled his ambition; since, however favoured by adventitious circumstances, we must acknowledge that the ra-

⁵ Rochelle, p. 370.

pidity of his attacks, and the sagacity of his stratagems, with that invincible spirit which he imparted to his occasional desponding companions⁶, were the primary causes of his success. On entering the place, and contemplating the wretched state to which it was reduced, he cried out with all that impassioned zeal which rivets the attention of the vulgar; "I recognize, in the long opposition of this weak city, the uncommon protection which heaven has afforded my cause.

We must also be allowed to notice in this place the humanity or policy of the impostor, which led him to treat his prisoners with familiarity and kindness; to suffer the dead to be decently interred, to command his troops to shew mercy in the captured town⁷; while the Russians sunk to the same common level of

⁶ Sensible of the pious character of the Russians, he omitted no opportunity of awakening their zeal, and of strengthening his cause, by constant appeals to heaven to support his injured rights. In the presence of his whole army, it was his invariable custom to pray aloud in these impressive words before the commencement of the battle: "Destroy me, O just Judge, and blot out my name from among men, if what I undertake be done unjustly or wickedly; thou seest my innocence, help my most righteous cause, I commend myself and these my fellow soldiers into thy protection, O Queen of Heaven." See this address in *Russian Impostor*, p. 87. He must either have been a great hypocrite, or else thoroughly convinced of his royal birthright, to have uttered these perilous words.

⁷ Tooke, vol. i. p. 312.

destruction

destruction all their countrymen who had been taken prisoners in his army³.

Yet notwithstanding this accession of force, the false Demetrius still discovered great unwillingness to march immediately to Moscow, from the uncertain accounts of his interest with the inhabitants. ⁴ Before he proceeded thither, he determined to send two traitors, who had joined his party, for the purpose of obtaining accurate information concerning the sentiments of the capital. We are ignorant whether to assign this proceeding to motives of policy, which rendered him fearful of disgusting, and consequently inspiring their minds to resistance, by oppressing them with the violence and ravages of war; or to a laudable spirit of mercy, which urged him to spare the blood of his countrymen. The emissaries departed with all those sensations of terror which men feel who are about to meet instant death, as the place of their destination was the abode of the most zealous partisans of the house of Godounof. Two versts from Mos-

³ Margeret, vol. i. p. 8. A writer not very favourable to Demetrius, thus delineates his character: "He was a gentleman very comely of personage, active of body, and a great scholar, highly affecting the English, German, and Polish nations, being also himself for his valour and generosity highly beloved by his victorious army." See a Brief Historical Relation of the Empire of Russia, p. 15.

⁴ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 285.

cow stands a considerable village, called Krasno-Célo; here they halted, with the full expectation of being dragged to punishment. The peasants however, who had so long detested the administration of Boris, and who felt no affection for the present unsettled government, ran with eager joy to welcome the arrival of the deputies of the Czarovitz. The officers sent to arrest them did not possess sufficient courage or loyalty to approach the village on beholding their formidable zeal.

¹⁰ The boldness of Pouchin and Plestchief, these servants of rebellion, now increased with their power. At the head of the armed peasants of Krasno-Célo they proceeded to the principal square of Moscow, and were joined in their way by a prodigious concourse of people, and by a strong band of the Strelitzes, who also had left the city. The interposition of religion was now for the first time ineffectual; at the pressing intreaties of the boyars, the patriarch once more made his appearance among the people to quell the spreading insurrection; but all his earnest exhortations of keeping inviolable their oaths of allegiance were overwhelmed by seditious clamours. The agents of the impostor then

¹⁰ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 484.

cried,

cried, "*Long live the Czar Demetrius!*" which was answered with the most frantic acclamations; for such has been in all ages the incense and characteristic tribute of the vulgar, alike regardless whether the object of their applause possesses the heart of the sanguinary Nero, or of the amiable Titus. When their shouts of approbation had subsided, with looks of furious resentment they rushed towards the royal palace, seized the widow of Godounouf the Czar, her son, and Axenia, sister to the young prince; and to heighten their misery, lodged them in the very house Boris had occupied in a private station, which they surrounded with a strict guard, to hinder them from making any attempt to escape. The houses of the great now experienced every species of rapine and licentiousness. In this scene of riot, havoc, and confusion, all the kinsmen and adherents of Godounouf perished by the edge of the sword", while their houses were razed to the ground, and their fiefs and villages experienced every species of depredation.

"Apprized of the submission of Moscow, Otropief advanced towards Toula. He there received the deputies of the capital, accom-

¹¹ Russian Impostor, p. 73.

¹² Levesque, tom. iii. p. 287, 288, 289.

panied with a crowd of nobility, who came to acknowledge his rights in the name of the people and boyars, and who displayed all that servile adulation which has such little connection with the heart. At the head of this deputation were the princes Vorotinski and Teliatovski: at the same time arrived the Deputies of the Cossacks of the Don. The calumniators of the impostor affirm, that on this occasion he first evinced his dislike towards the Russian nobility. The Cossacks, according to their report, were the first honoured with an audience: these fierce barbarians insulted the envoys of Moscow, afterwards struck the person of prince Teliatovski, and then threw him into prison. But peace and good order are the work of time and labour; can therefore the excesses committed by a powerful and undisciplined soldiery, in the heat of general anarchy, be imputed with justice to their new sovereign, whose authority could never be exerted with effect; whilst the very attempt perhaps, instead of averting, would not only have increased their cruelty, and exposed him to ridicule, disgrace and expulsion.

The close imprisonment of the Czar and his mother could not quiet the fears of the usurper; he still conceived that he had real ground for apprehension as long as they

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existed. The princes Golitzin, Massalski, and Basmanof (whose turpitude was now found equal to his former valour and fidelity), were therefore empowered to put a period to their sufferings.

Guided by the same views of prudence, the impostor was now to authorise a deed, which, while it cast a deep stain on his gratitude, yet still must be considered as the effect of fatal necessity. To remove the patriarch from his ecclesiastical throne, who had loved and patronized the virtues of the monk Otopief, but who detested the crimes of the false Demetrius, formed his next daring resolution. A band of ruffians entered the palace of the venerable pontiff, conducted, or rather dragged him to the cathedral, and at the foot of those altars where he had so often struck the people with reverential awe in the performance of his sacred functions, his pontifical vestments were forcibly stripped off with all that insolence which invariably accompanies hardened villainy. Clothed afterwards in the habit of a common monk, the mild lustre of his virtues were for ever obscured in the gloom of a remote monastery.

Having thus, unmolested by any opposition, degraded an adversary, whose ready eloquence and authoritative character might have justly provoked his fears, Otopief pronounced

nounced the orders for another deed, which, in comparison with the former, was accompanied with trivial difficulty and danger. Golitzin and Massalski, with two other noblemen, and a slender train of soldiers, came to the palace where the young Czar was mournfully seated between his mother and sister, hourly awaiting the ministers of death. ¹³ The tragic scene was opened by the strangling of the Czarina, whilst her son, torn from her struggling arms, and thrust into a separate apartment, sustained a long contest with four of his assassins. At last one of them overpowered and suffocated him. The bodies of these two illustrious victims were then exposed to the view of the people, who, without the previous labour of investigation, accredited the report of their having poisoned themselves. ¹⁴ While the youth and exquisite beauty of Axenia only escaped to be immured for ever in the convent of Vladimir. Thus was the race of Boris excluded from the Russian throne; and to justify this extinction, which so boldly bade defiance to the

¹³ The strangling of the Czar only is mentioned in the *Brief Historical Relation of the Empire of Russia*, p. 15.

¹⁴ To blacken his character, the opposite party have declared that Axenia was indebted for her life to his lust and her beauty; but the chastity of Demetrius in this particular is most ably vindicated from every aspersion by the impartial Levesque, tom. iii. p. 202.

laws of justice and the obligations of morality, can only be attempted by the advocates of state policy¹⁵.

1605. NOW, no longer beholding any competition to remove or enemy to punish, the impostor made his solemn entry into the capital on the twentieth day of June, surrounded by a numerous retinue of noblemen, with the two armies, Russian and Polish, forming the rear of this splendid procession¹. All the bells sounded their peals of joy, all the streets, windows, tops of houses, and other conspicuous places swarmed with a multitude of people, who as he passed along received him

¹⁵ Mons. de le Rochelle in his *Czar Demetrius*, p. 374, 375. ever eager to defend and extol his hero, in opposition to the best authorities, asserts that the son and mother became their own destroyers. I am obliged to notice this erroneous declaration in *Russian Impostor*, p. 72. St. Lazare, in p. 89. *Remarques d'Histoire*, embraces the same opinion and in p. 102. contradicts his own evidence; but this is not the only place where this historian has forgot himself when speaking of Russian affairs; while the sensible and observing secretary of the Persian embassy, Adam Olearius, thus relates the transaction, with freedom or with malevolence: "Demetrius envoya un Diakou secretaire avec ordre d'etrangler la mere & le fils, & de faire couvrir le bruit qu'ils s'etoient empoisonnez," tom. i. liv. iii. p. 266. See likewise Margeret, p. 39.

¹ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 291. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 485.

with

with the most profound and flattering professions of joy and respect²; the clergy with their images and crosses met him in the market place. He there alighted from his milk-white courser, and advanced to the cathedral to acknowledge the bounty of Heaven in ordaining so triumphant a return to his kingdom. At the same moment they chaunted their prayers, the Polish army drowned their pious voices by the harsh music of cymbals and trumpets. This unseasonable novelty produced a momentary disturbance among all ranks, who regarded it as an insult to their religion; for in Russia warlike instruments are never suffered to be confounded with holy chaunts³.

Recognized by the whole nation, Otropief wished his sovereign authority to be fortified by the rites of royal unction and consecration. ⁴He appointed the archbishop of Riazan to fill up the first of ecclesiastical dig-

² Russian Impostor, p. 76. Hear the poetic salutation of the servile Russians: "Long live the Great Duke of Russia; thou art the right and bright morning star that now shines in Russia." Russian Impostor, p. 77.

³ "Ils ne souffrent point d'orgues ni d'autres instruments de musique dans leur églises, & ils disent sur cela que les choses inanimées ne sont pas capable de glorifier le Dieu." The words of Olearius, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 3; 8.—If they were guilty of no other errors in religion, we should not have occasion so often to lament and expose their superstition.

⁴ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 292.

nities, so lately vacant by his political injustice. This prelate, of Greek extraction, who first appeared in Russia under the reign of Fedor Ivanovitz, maintained in all his actions the reputed character of his countrymen; subtle, domineering, inflexible, and avaricious; capable of concealing the most detestable intrigues under the disguise of sanctity, and willing to immolate all duties both public and private at the shrine of ambition; in short, he was just the instrument which the posture of Otropief's affairs so essentially demanded. On the last day of July³ the false Czarovitz received from the hands of the new patriarch the crown of the Czar, under the name of Demetrius Ivanovitz.

A most curious and interesting meeting soon afterwards occurred, which was managed with such consummate art, as to convince the credulous vulgar, and stagger even the suspicions of reflecting men. The widow of Ivan, the mother of Demetrius, yet survived the injuries of oppression: could then her supposed son, on his coming to the throne, permit a princess no less venerable from her age, than remarkable from her numerous misfortunes, to languish in a dreary and sorrowful retreat an hundred leagues⁴ distant from

³ Margaret, p. 49.

⁴ See the Report of a Massacre at Moscow.

the capital? would not such inhumanity betray the most strong and indisputable marks of his imposture? while to see her, and not to be embraced as her lost son, would inevitably provoke the doubts of the multitude, and their doubts might be the prelude of a sudden and general insurrection. But perhaps his accurate observations on human nature, not more than the sanguineness of his disposition, induced him to hope, that by rescuing her from her present meanness and obscurity of station, and by having avenged her wrongs in the extirpation of Boris and his numerous kinsmen; gratitude, co-operating with the fears of immediate punishment, would tempt her to receive him as the true image of Ivan, and the legitimate successor to the Russian throne'. Buoyed up by this train of reflections; he dispatched an handsome escort to conduct her from the convent to Moscow. From the city he advanced to meet her, followed by an innumerable concourse of people. Those who had favoured his plans, from the impulse of blind credu-

⁷ There is much political sagacity, much insight in the human character to be discovered in the following observation of Adam Olearius: "La bonne dame sçavoit pourtant fort bien que Demetrius son fils avoit été tué, mais elle dissimuloit adroitement; tant à cause du ressentiment qu'elle avoit contre la memoire de Boris & de peur d'être maltraitée par ce faux Demetrius;" tom. i. liv. iii. p. 267.

lity, or restless ambition, those who were attached to his person, and those who rejected his pretensions with secret disdain, were all equally anxious to be spectators of this extraordinary interview.

Demetrius, for by this name we must now call him, on beholding his mother, alighted from his horse, ran and threw himself into her inviting arms; they pressed each other to the heart like dearest relatives long separated, shed tears of joy at their wonderful deliverance, while in all their tender caresses, untutored nature seemed to play her spontaneous part. The Czarina was then conducted by her affectionate son to the monastery of the Ascension, where apartments were prepared suitable in every respect to the mother of the reigning sovereign*.

Malignity, who treats truth with the same disrespect as flattery, though her assertions are more accredited from the tone of indepen-

* Coxe, vol. ii. p. 7.; Voltaire Hist. Gen. tom. v. p. 166. Rochelle, p. 377.; Russian Impostor, p. 83—85.; Levesque, tom. iii. p. 294.; Williams, p. 60.; Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 486, 487. All these writers confirm the tenderness and joy expressed by the mother and son on this interesting interview. St. Lazare relates, that after she had conversed, "un quart d'heure," with her son, "en presence de la noblesse & du peuple, *elle mourut en son carrosse.*" Rem. d'Histoire, p. 103. I wonder from what source he could have picked up such an incredible story.

dence

dence with which she utters them, has declared that Demetrius again filled the city with informers; but the relation of one act will be sufficient to defeat the malice of this report, and to satisfy the candid and impartial, that, when not influenced by state motives, he could add to his other laurels the palm of clemency and justice.

The prince Vassili Ivanovitz Chouiski might be deemed his chief enemy from several circumstances; as the son of the Czar Ivan, he could not acknowledge him without avowing his dishonourable collusion with Boris in the mysterious affair of Uglitz, where it may be remembered his report had testified, that he himself had seen and minutely examined the corpse of the Czaro-vitz; while the other alternative of adhering to that declaration was no less dangerous, though more worthy of a resolute character. His death therefore appeared necessary to the new Czar, from motives of policy as well as of revenge; but the courage of Demetrius scorned to embroil his hands in the blood of the conquered: he was even permitted to enjoy his prostituted dignities until the vigilance of government detected him in a conspiracy which endangered the life of the Czar. He was then arrested with his accomplices: Demetrius, actuated by the
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sentiments of equity, felt extremely desirous that their condemnation or acquittal should be pronounced in the most public and solemn manner; he did not therefore place their lives in the base and incapable hands of lordly sycophants and courtly flatterers, who sully and disgrace the temple of justice by an entire devotion to the caprice and will of their arbitrary sovereign, but more nobly submitted them in the court of his palace to the unbiaſſed judgment of the people. Chouiski was convicted, and sentenced to death for high treason by their unanimous decision, while his accomplices were condemned to a prison*.

But the fatal lenity⁹ and indulgence of Demetrius forbade this salutary decree against Chouiski to be executed. The widow of Ivan, no doubt on the private injunctions of her real or pretended son, implored the pardon of the criminal. Influenced therefore, in appearance, by her solicitations, though in reality by the generous desire of gaining all

* Levesque, tom. iii. p. 296, 297.

⁹ Margeret justly observes in his old French, "ça est la plus grande faute que jamais l'Empereur Demetrius eust sçeu commettre, car cecy luy à procuré sa morte" *Etat de l'Empire Russe*, p. 40. ; *Rochelle*, p. 396. ; *A Brief Historical Relation of the Empire of Russia*, p. 17. ; *Russian Impostor*, p. 91. ; *Williams's Russia*, p. 61. ; *Coxe*, vol. ii. p. 13.

hearts by his mercy, he willingly consented, that instead of receiving death for his conspiracy, he should only be committed to prison: nor was the period long before he was finally restored to all his original honours. Thus, instead of suffering a bloody and corrupt race to infuse terror and despair among the hearts of people according to the representations of malevolence, he seems by this splendid act of virtue to have sought an atonement for his past unavoidable crimes, and to have reconciled all ranks to his power by this display of moderation and benevolence¹¹.

The Czar, now no longer taught to believe that the poison of intestine cabals lurked in the vitals of his government, and that the blasts of opposition, however unexpected and impetuous, could not overturn a throne supported by the attachment of his subjects, dispatched Vlassief, the secretary of state, in quality of ambassador to the Polish court. This statesman, from his sound judgment and extensive acquaintance with the views and interests of the neighbouring states, had already executed many important missions with success; he was therefore well qualified for the direction of affairs committed to his trust. 1606.

¹¹ "Il vouloit par ce trait de clemence, & de générosité calmer les esprits, & s'attirer l'estime & l'affection de ses sujets," is the judicious remark of Lacombe, p. 70.

His

His first object was to procure an alliance between Sigismund and his master, particularly against the Turks. This treaty however could not be ratified without the interference of the diet, but he obtained the promise of Sigismund to propose this business at the next convention.

Demetrius, whose tender passion had never faded away or sunk into oblivion, during all the stages of his ambitious undertaking, also charged his secretary to demand for him in marriage the daughter of the palatine of Sendomir. The nuptials of Sigismund with Constance the Archduchess of Austria had drawn to Cracow all the grandeur, wealth, and power of the kingdom; in the presence of this crowded and brilliant assembly, and with every circumstance of religious pomp, the Russian ambassador affianced the heiress of Mnisheck in the name of his master; the benediction was bestowed by the cardinal Matfiovski bishop of Cracow¹², to the great umbrage of the Russians, who so invariably

¹² Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 489. Margeret, p. 40. Russian Impostor, p. 95—97. In the entertainment given by Sigismund to Marina, on her nuptials, jewels to the value of two hundred thousand ducats (the presents of her royal lover) were served up to the table in the last course, instead of fruit; a noble and magnificent exchange: and from this example we may form some estimate of the wealth of the Russian treasury in the seventeenth century.

professed a deep-rooted hatred to the heretical tenets of the Romish church.

The beautiful and aspiring Marina, accompanied by her father, made her entry on the first of May. Her ardent lover, with his accustomed attention, hastened even to Mojaïsk to congratulate their arrival. In all the towns the populace welcomed her with acclamations; the superior orders vied with each other in hollow professions of obsequious duty; while the²³ inhabitants of Moscow piqued themselves on outstripping, by the splendour of their preparations, every other city which had received her admired person. From every window hung pieces of scarlet ornamented with gold and silver, and every street through which she passed was covered with a golden cloth of Persia. This pomp, these bursts of joy and general festivity, seemingly gave omens of a prosperous reign²⁴. But the noxious weed of discontent was only checked to spring up with redoubled vigour. Conducted to the palace of the Czars, she there received the compliments of the nobility; afterwards her residence was fixed near the Czarina at the magnificent convent

²³ Rochelle, p. 400.

²⁴ See a full account of her entrance and reception in Russian Impostor, p. 98, 99.

of the Ascension until the nuptial rites were celebrated.

The first appearances of public suspicion and disgust arose from the policy or affectation of Mnifheck, who, to impress the Russians with exalted notions of his consequence, or to provide for the security of his son-in-law, had brought with him four thousand Poles. So numerous a band of armed strangers were highly alarming to the fears, and no less offensive to the prejudices of the people. But the public discontent was soon quickened into reproachful clamours and murmuring imprecations, by the polished gallantry of the Czar²⁵: enchanted with the extroverted features and varying accomplishments of the young princess, to divert the wearisome uniformity of a cloistered life, which is so peculiarly repugnant to a gay and youthful mind; he sought to beguile her hours, by the vivacity of his conversation, by the elegance of his musical entertainments, and by the pleasures of the festive dance. These delicate and innocent enjoyments were magnified into so many heinous crimes, in the eyes of an uncultivated people, who tolerated, in their wild and illiberal devotion, no indulgences but the bestialities of intemperance, and consequently

²⁵ See the tenth article of Demetrius's condemnation in the Report of a Massacre at Moscow.

were the unforgiving foes of every thing to which the name of refinement could be affixed. To heighten their indignation, which was unnecessary, the walls of the¹⁶ convent were alone polluted with these amusements; which the fanaticism of the people considered as a direct attempt to subvert the most sacred of human institutions. The opinion became therefore soon to be propagated and listened to with a greedy ear by envy, calumny, and ignorance, that their new sovereign was a warm proselyte to the Catholic religion.

¹⁷ About the same time arrived the ambassadors of Sigismund with instructions to demand from the Czar the cession of Smolensk and some other countries, and assistance against the Tatars of Krim. To the first of these claims he gave an absolute denial; resolving rather to perish than to consent to the dismemberment of his territories¹⁸. The last proposal he consented to ratify, from a wise and deliberate attention to his own interest, as the invasions of these formidable barbarians were equally injurious to himself and Sigismund. But the current of popular prejudice flowed too strong to be stopped by an expe-

¹⁶ Coxe, vol. ii. p. 12.

¹⁷ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 298—301.

¹⁸ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 491.

dient judicious or honourable. His most simple measures were now interpreted into projected innovations. And this league of mutual aid which should have purchased him the gratitude of his subjects, was deemed detrimental to the safety and interest of the state. His next attempt, as new as it was elevated, as unfortunate as it was meritorious, diffused a general indignation throughout the fickle and ungrateful capital. From his unwearied endeavours to eradicate the obnoxious prejudices of his subjects, to liberalize their hearts, to reform their rusticity of manners, and to enlarge their circumscribed views, proceeded that general hatred, which undermined the foundations of his throne¹⁹. He first laboured to mitigate their national antipathy by admitting equally to his presence Greek and Catholic monks. To soften their formal austerity of manners, he introduced music at his table²⁰; which in the reigns of his predecessors bore a strong resemblance to the refectory of a convent. That the gradations of rank might be restored to a more noble equality, he laid aside the pomp of majesty, and raised his nobles to the independent station of his friends and companions; while his ancestors subdued the

¹⁹ Margeret, p. 52.

²⁰ See Muller apud Coxe, vol. ii. p. 11—26. Margeret, p. 41.

haughty

haughty fierceness of the Boyars, and upheld their own dominion, not by the influence of social virtues, but by the terrible and despotic air which they constantly maintained in their court. Without aiming to confound all distinctions of ranks, he abolished that inconvenient though perhaps necessary fashion, which former Czars had adopted, of never shewing themselves to their subjects, but when surrounded by a magnificent retinue, by his appearance with a few gentlemen only about the Kremlin, and the streets of Moscow. But the shafts of hatred were too strongly shot against his power for any of his patriotic endeavours²¹ to succeed in breaking the spell which held his countrymen in such disgraceful bondage to the barbarous customs of their ancestors.

The marriage of Demetrius now occupied the attention of the people. Fresh dissensions were fomented, instead of being allayed, by the conduct of the patriarch. In the marriage ceremony he placed the crown of the Czars on the head of Marina²². This act, so contrary

²¹ The author of the Report of a Massacre at Moscow thus exposes Demetrius's errors in the following curious and complimentary manner:—"If he had only applied himself to their humours, though he had been baser than a paunch-fed monk, he might have kept the crown on his head."

²² Russian Impostor, p. 99.

to ancient usage, was regarded as a direct attempt to overthrow the whole fabric of their laws; and the permission for strangers to be present at the ceremony, a palpable insult to their religion. While the minds of the people were thus soured by jealousy and hatred, an event happened which entirely undermined the doubtful throne of Demetrius. The inferior Poles, since their residence at Moscow, like their nobles, had assumed a demeanor full of pride towards the Russians, and indicative of their profound contempt for the rudeness of their manners; nor were they less prompt in finding occasions to provoke the Russian courage. Grown insolent and impatient of controul, from the too great indulgence of the Czar²³, they ran through the city during the festivals of his marriage, and, in the phrensy of their drunkenness, stripped and chastised whoever came in their way, and burst open the doors of several houses in search of women, to gratify their brutal lusts²⁴.

The Strelitzes, exasperated beyond all bounds at this licentious and inhuman conduct, which they imputed to the favour shewn them by their monarch, and aggravated at

²³ The Wars and Miseries of Russia, chap. iii. p. 7.

²⁴ The Report of a Massacre at Moscow.

his erection of a church for the exercise of their religious faith, from furious clamour and unguarded invective, proceeded to the formation of a conspiracy against their prince, which was timely discovered. The conspirators, conducted into the presence of Basmanof, conscious of their guilt, and incapable of flight or resistance, confessed their crime in the hope of mitigating the severity of their fate; Mikoulin their chief commander no sooner heard them declare their guilt, than he ordered their more faithful comrades to involve the whole in one massacre; and to inspirit their sluggishness, it is said he butchered numbers of them with his own hand²⁵. Demetrius strongly expressed his rage at this violent proceeding, as deeply wounding his character, and peace of mind.

²⁶ But while the court was immersed in splendid banquetings and a round of pleasures, Chouiski weaved a plot, the success of which was as much to be deplored from the desolating consequences which ensued, as the motives to be detested. Demetrius had already received intelligence that fifteen thousand soldiers were in open revolt. Apprehensive of

²⁵ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 303—306.

²⁶ Russian Impostor, p. 100.

augmenting the evil by rigorous orders, he only enjoined the Poles to keep themselves in a state of readiness, and the Strelitzes, with four companies of his guards, were placed around his person to avert the destruction which hung over his head. These commands were notified to the several battalions, on the fourteenth of May. And the more effectually to conceal his fears of becoming the victim of seditious rage, he not only gave directions, on the following²⁷ day, for a masked ball, but also had intended to treat the people with the representation of the attack and defence of a town. To heighten the effect of this spectacle, a citadel of wood was to be raised and furnished with artillery. A malevolent report was circulated, and received with sufficient credit to fix the yet fluctuating minds of the people, that the Czar, having abandoned all hopes of recovering their precarious affection and subduing their alarming insolence, had ordered his soldiers to fire on the people from the top of the citadel, while the Poles were enjoined to massacre all the noblemen invited to this military entertainment.

²⁷ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 492. Vide the Report of a Massacre at Moscow.

On the night before the spectacle was to be exhibited, Chouiski assembled at his house all who were known to be desperate in their fortunes and daring in their courage, and all his kinsmen, friends, and their domestics. With a look which inspired alacrity and confidence, and with that eloquence which violent resentment infuses, he addressed himself to his numerous partizans, telling them it was now time to sally forth, and by one glorious effort to do a service acceptable to their God and country, by liberating themselves from the unbounded tyranny of the Poles, and the intolerable sway of a monk, whose enormous crimes had not only led him to abandon his habit, but the faith of his ancestors. These words, pronounced with all that impetuous ardour which actuates minds in hazardous undertakings, produced the desired effect on his audience. With one voice they cried out, "We are prepared to die in the defence of our injured country and religion." They then armed themselves in haste, aroused the city by the alarum bell, and, in conjunction with a frantic multitude, swore the immediate death of the impostor²⁸.

Demetrius

²⁸ Russian Impostor, p. 105. The Wars and Miseries of Russia, chap. iv. p. 13. Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 491. Olearius, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 268. It may excite a smile on the face of

Demetrius slept in thoughtless security, unconscious of the sudden approach of ruin ; and so much had his mind been prepossessed that the hasty spark of revolt had been utterly extinguished, that he permitted only thirty men out of the four companies, which he had formed, to remain near his person ; whilst the whole force of Cossacks and Poles would have guarded him with the most assiduous fidelity, had his fears but happily insinuated to him, that the rigour of discipline was still unrestored, the strength of faction unsubdued. This imprudent supineness satisfactorily refutes the report²⁹ of his desperate intention to massacre the next day, both the nobles and people ; for even to the heart of the most callous the voice of conscience can yet speak with a force sufficient to banish all repose from his mind, when the hour arrives

the gravest reader, to read that among the great proofs discovered by the *penetrating* Russians of the imposture of their sovereign, may be ranked his invariable custom of mounting his horse without the help of his attendants, and of his preference to the paces of a furious stallion. Whereas a *genuine* Czar should be lifted on his horse and only proceed with a slow and studied composure. See a note of Mr. Tooke, vol. i. p. 316.

²⁹ Mr. Coxe, with his usual good sense and impartial judgment, has discredited this report, in a note, and attributed it to the calumniating invention of Vassili Chouiski, vol. ii. p. 12.

that

that the plot framed at his suggestions, is to be put into execution.

The tremendous sound of the alarum bell presently awoke the astonished Basmanof, who slept in an adjoining chamber to the Czar. To stimulate the zeal of the rabble, who advanced with him to the palace, Chouiski marched at their head with the cross in one hand and a sabre in the other³⁰. The sight of that revered sign so much increased the blaze of their fanaticism, that they easily persuaded themselves they were acting under the authority of divine commission, and that in his voice might be recognized the unalterable decrees of Omnipotence.

Demetrius³¹ soon started up from his dream of security, and rushed to the vestibule of his palace in the hopes of quelling the revolt by his presence. But the storm was too outrageous to be appeased by this weak and injudicious expedient. The words he uttered were drowned by the shouts of menace and reproach. His natural intrepidity and unshaken constancy of mind entirely forsook him; and he retired completely dismayed at this scene of wild confusion. Basmanof viewed their rage not with the silent conster-

³⁰ Russian Impostor, p. 105. Voltaire Histoire General, tom. v. p. 166. Coxe, vol. ii. p. 13. Lacombe, p. 72.

³¹ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 307—310.

nation of his master, but with a mind unacquainted with fear, and determined, if necessary, to fall in the cause of insulted royalty. With a firm and dignified air he advanced to those Boyars who appeared the most dispassionate in this tumultuous scene, and painted to them, with a generous though ineffectual ardour, the duty of their allegiance; exhorting them also to the honourable task of restraining the licentiousness of the people, by their discourse and example; he was silenced in the middle of his noble harangue, by innumerable daggers. Our pity for his untimely fate must not however absorb our abhorrence at his unmanly desertion of Fedor.

The conspirators abandoned this victim, and then broke down the gates of the palace in their eager search for Demetrius. In vain the guards attempted to oppose their fury; they soon fell a bright example of courage and fidelity. Their sovereign in the mean time had fled towards the inner apartments, in hopes of making his escape through ways unknown to the murderers; but to his despair and astonishment, he discovered every secret passage guarded with the utmost care by the victorious conspirators. In the anguish of his perplexity and fear, he at last espied a window which looked into a narrow court,

court. Deserted and completely encompassed, in the madness of his despair, he threw himself into the court from this window which measured forty feet from the ground³²; and in his fall he dislocated his leg, and inflicted a severe wound on his head. At his shrieking outcries, a few of his guards with some of the people and Strelitzes assembled around him. Compassion touched them all at beholding his deplorable situation. The guards and the Strelitzes, in carrying him into the palace, swore to perish in his defence³³. All the pressing supplications of the Boyars, to deliver to their just rage an impostor whom faction alone had placed on the throne, were heard with respect, but not with obedience. "We recognize," said these powerful protectors, "in the person of our prince, the son of Ivan, in whose support we are prepared to shed the last drop of our blood." This firm and unexpected answer awed and intimidated the people; and the same nobles who were about to commit a detestable parricide with the approbation of the people, now felt their rage converted into fear at this sudden and suspicious change of their sentiments.

³² Vide Russian Impostor, p. 108. and Report of a Massacre at Moscow.

³³ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 493.

In this delicate and critical juncture, when the scales of fortune seemed to preponderate on the side of Demetrius, it required the nicest policy to restore them to their proper weight. Under the appearance therefore of a well acted concern for the general weal, they proposed that the Czarina should resolve their doubts concerning the mystery of his birth; while their policy launched out at the same time into praises of the fidelity displayed by the soldiers and people. This proposal, which so seemingly clung to moderation and justice, was relished by all parties. With a joy which scarcely could be concealed, Chouiski saw himself appointed to propose these questions. Accompanied by a few of his most devoted friends, he hastened to the convent with a speed suitable to the emergency of his office. On their return, they announced to the impatient and agitated people that the Czarina had spurned with contempt the filial pretensions of the impostor, being influenced no longer to conceal the truth by the fear of her death³⁴.

These words turned their compassion into the most unbounded wrath. Even the guards and Strelitzes, unmindful of the recent sanctity of their oath, withdrew themselves

³⁴ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 495. Russian Impostor, p. 111.

ashamed to protect the cause of an impostor; The people, no longer controlled by the presence of the soldiers, threw themselves on Demetrius and terminated his life by a multitude of wounds. His body, after being exposed three days in the market place, was then burnt to ashes by their barbarous and impotent revenge³⁵.

During this execution, Moscow resembled a city taken by storm, from the groans of despair and from the unprovoked and immense slaughter which filled all quarters; the streets being filled by a part of the people divided into several bands, who prowled about the city in search of the Poles, and those Russians who had assumed their dress in compliance to the fatal taste of Demetrius³⁶. While one party strewed the places with their mutilated carcases, another rushed into the apartments of the disconsolate Marina. In the confusion of her terror, she had concealed herself under the long robe of one of her female attendants³⁷. But the reverence due to her person would have been soon

³⁵ Rochelle, p. 419. The Report of a bloody and terrible Massacre at Moscow.

³⁶ A brief Historical relation of the Empire of Russia, p. 18. See also the War and Miseries of Russia, chap. iv. p. 14.

³⁷ Russian Impostor, p. 109.

invaded

invaded by these ruffians³⁸ had not some of the Boyars interposed their timely assistance.

The palatine of Sendomir, the Polish noblemen and their faithful followers, had resolved, on this lamentable intelligence of the death of Demetrius, to defend themselves with the utmost vigour. To support this determination, they planted their cannon before the spacious mansion of Godounof, the place of their residence, and converted this building of strength into a citadel. But they were released from all their apprehensions by the arrival of Chouiski and the principal Boyars, who pledged themselves to preserve their persons inviolate from the insults of the people on their immediate surrender. So unlooked for an offer was immediately embraced by men despairing of mercy, and deprived of seeking a shelter in the friendly arms of flight.

So soon did tranquillity succeed this memorable revolt, that in the next night, had not the marks of violence appeared, it could never have been supposed that the preceding day had been stained by the sacrilegious murder of their sovereign; over whose memory will be dropped the tear of pity, whether his pretensions to royal birth were genuine or

³⁸ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 311.

counterfeit³⁹, as long as mildness to the failings of others, an amiable benevolence of soul, and

³⁹ Notwithstanding all the copious speculations of the wise, the real parentage of Demetrius, like that of Perkin Warbeck, will ever remain in doubtful obscurity. But from the pile of flimsy conjecture which has been heaped together concerning the impostor of Gritchka Rastriga, the secularized monk, as by that name Demetrius is known in Russia, we shall select the declaration of Margeret, a French gentleman and confidential servant to Demetrius, as most worthy of our notice and inspection. After extolling Demetrius for his great qualities and for his sincere admiration of Henry the Fourth of France, to whom he was upon the point of sending an ambassador, he goes on by saying that Demetrius never assumed the ecclesiastical habit under the name of Otopief; but that this Otopief, formerly secretary to the patriarch, had conducted the Czarovitz into Poland, and returned with him into Russia; that any person might have seen him and his brothers who held lands under the city of Galitch; that this Gritchka was thirty-five years of age while Demetrius was only three or four-and-twenty; that the Czar, notwithstanding his deep obligations to him, was at last compelled to banish him to Yaroslaf, from his low, insolent and disorderly conduct; that he was there when the prince fell a sacrifice to popular prejudice; that he was assured by an Englishman belonging to the factory at Yaroslaf, that after his death he still declared him to be the true Demetrius, the son of Ivan, and himself the identical Otopief; he finishes his narrative by telling us he lost sight of this man for ever, after he was sent for to Moscow, by the orders of Chouiski. This positive intelligence is sufficient to put the matter beyond all question, if the loquacity of the Frenchman and his affection for Demetrius, has not led him to overleap the bounds of moderation and truth. *Estat de l'Empire de Russie*, p. 54. The prejudices of Le Clerc (which have lead him to suppress many circumstances favourable to Demetrius, and to conclude him so hastily an impostor), are neither tempered by good sense, ingenuity, nor learning;

yet

and a strong desire to excite in his people a love for justice, peace, humanity and learning, are ranked in the catalogue of human virtues.

1601. A CALAMITOUS period of seven years elapsed from the death of Demetrius to the establishment of the house of Romanof; the whole history of which is but one tissue of rapine, tyranny, tumult, and oppression. The nature of my undertaking allows me the happy privilege of noticing these tiresome, though grievous events, in a manner only to preserve the unbroken thread of my narration.

yet perhaps the unbiassed reader will discover some truth in his malicious remark on Levesque's investigation of this doubtful question, " Qu'il ait employé huit pages d'une discussion, qui n'éclaircit rien et qui ne prouve rien ;" tom. ii. p. 495. Mr. Coxe, whom we have before praised for the air of candour, and discernment, which marks his opinions, after collecting, methodizing, and criticising the sentiments of other historians on this mysterious character, with the ability of a scholar and the liberality of a gentleman, finishes his enquiry with these decisive words: " With respect to myself I shall only add, that having endeavoured to examine the history of the Czar Demetrius, without prejudice or partiality, I am strongly inclined to believe that he was not an impostor, but the real person whose name he assumed ;" vol. ii. p. 18.

The

The treacherous Chouiski, called to the vacant throne by his superior faction, soon beheld his government distracted by two impostors of menial origin, though of daring abilities. Both generated from the name of Demetrius, a name which stands unrivalled in the page of history for its production of impostors. The Cossacks of the Don furnished the first pretender; Elias Vassilief a fugitive slave, alleged his pretensions to the crown, and assumed the name of Peter, on this weak invention of his partizans, that the empress Irene had brought into the world a son in the year fifteen hundred and ninety-two; but that Boris, who scorned every principle of justice, when opposed to his own interest, had substituted in the young prince's place a daughter, who soon after died, under the name of Theodosia¹. We cannot regret the scarcity of authentic materials concerning the impostor's primary connection with the Cossacks of the Don.

1607.

This tale, so full of specks and blemishes, allured crowds of the lower people, who are always ready for any romantic enterprize during the times of civil discord; nor did this upstart pay the forfeit of his temerity, until the Czar in person broke his rebel ranks, after

¹ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 327—333.

a dreadful

a dreadful slaughter had ensued ; while a judicious plan of an infant boyar to inundate the town of Toula, where the impostor had retired, was the occasion of his appearing in chains before Chouiski, and soon afterwards of being sacrificed to his just vengeance.

Poland, a country so fruitful in yielding adversaries to disturb the Russian empire, whose punishment however, for the seeds of civil discord, scattered by her industrious dexterity, was to fall in future ages with a force so overwhelming, raised up the next opponent, whose claims outstripped even those of his predecessors in preposterous absurdity, but whose success long kept Chouiski in inquietude, and at last caused his destruction. A youth of the name of Andrew Nagui, announced himself to the credulous Russians as the deeply lamented Demetrius ; he asserted, that in the late sedition at Moscow, the people become blind from their excessive rage, had murdered some obscure person in his place, while he saved himself by flight*. This shallow and brief account was soon dispersed throughout the provinces, and received with transports of joy

* This fiction is countenanced by Brereton, who, not content with performing this good service to the dead prince, is generous enough to make the confined Marina the partner of his escape. See History of the War and Miseries of Russia, chap. iv. p. 15.

among

among the inferior classes of the nation³. Sigismund⁴ himself, king of Poland, so sagacious in discerning his own interest, scrupled not to sanction the impostor, as he foresaw that by contributing with all his power to the increase of anarchy, his coffers would be enriched, and his territories greatly enlarged beyond their ancient limits.

The impostor soon led an army into the field, composed of Lithuanians, Cossacks, and necessitous persons of the different provinces. The generals of Chouiski advanced to meet him with a cold reluctance; the suspicious and oppressive temper of the usurper, having destroyed all their affection in his ill-timed attempts to quell the movements of sedition⁵. In their first engagement near Briansk, they experienced a total overthrow; but the city was saved by the adventurous courage of

³ In his Philosophical Dialogues des Morts anciens et modernes, that ingenious and elegant writer Fontenelle, makes le troisième faux Demetrius declare to Descartes that he raised the structure of royalty on the strong basis of popular attachment to the name of Demetrius. "Je ne laissai pourtant pas de me faire une partie considérable. Le nom de Demetrius étoit aimé. On courroit toujours après ce nom. Vous savez ce que c'est que le peuple." Tom. ii. dialogue iv. p. 134.

⁴ Voltaire's Hist. Gen. tom. v. p. 168.

⁵ Strahlenberg, p. 209. A brief Historical Relation of the Empire of Russia, p. 18.

the Russian soldiers. When the Czar was informed of the menaced state of Briansk, he dispatched with speed some troops to its relief, under the command of the prince Kourakin. This general appeared in sight of Briansk on the fifteenth of December; but the weather had become so unusually temperate, that instead of the Desna being deeply frozen, that river, which parted the two armies, was only filled with pieces of floating ice. The hardy Russians aroused to a pitch of madness by this unexpected obstacle, without waiting for the orders of their chief, fearlessly plunged into the water, and by alternately swimming and crawling over large pieces of ice, they passed the river to the admiration of their friends, and dismay of their enemies. The besieged, animated by a spectacle of such prodigious intrepidity, poured out their vengeance on the rebels in a vigorous sally, and compelled them to retire. But this exploit did not contribute to stop the flames of sedition; the undismayed impostor hastened to Orel, where he was received by the inhabitants with open arms, and in the following year he pursued his destructive course towards Moscow, whilst the soldiers on their march abandoned themselves to every species of military plunder. Their first halt
was

was near the town of Touchino, two leagues only from the affrighted capital⁶.

Chouiski⁷ struck with the deepest sentiments of dismay at the rapidity of his progress, thought to weaken his cause, by tendering up to Sigismond the ambassador of Poland, the palatine of Sendomir, and his daughter Marina, who were guarded with the strictest care in Moscow, since the death of the crowned Demetrius. But public tranquillity instead of being confirmed, was only effectually destroyed by this injudicious proceeding. The active rebel, informed of their departure, soon overtook and routed their slender escort. The ambassador was permitted to pursue his journey into Poland unmolested, but the palatine and Marina were brought back in triumph to his camp. The degenerate Marina, equally conspicuous by her beauty and misfortunes, to promote a detestable ambition, submitted to the inordinate desires of her barbarian conqueror⁸. In the presence of 1608. his troops, after some display of reluctance,

⁶ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 334—344.

⁷ Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 504, 505. Russian Impostor, p. 147. Lacombe, 76, 77.

⁸ If we may trust Olearius, her acknowledgment of the impostor, in the character of husband, was in obedience to the mandate of the Poles, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 270. I am glad to see for the honour of the female sex, some apology offered for her weak and vicious conduct.

she countenanced the fraud, by embracing him as her long lost and beloved Demetrius⁹; whilst the contemptible palatine, by the most solemn oaths, acknowledged his son-in-law. Their infamous declaration soon brought to him fresh swarms of volunteers, and the homage of cities, which till this unexpected event had remained sincere in their professions of loyalty to the Czar.

In the two years the impostor displayed the standard of rebellion, all civil order was utterly banished from Moscow¹⁰; the people overawed the palace, and the adverse parties in the capital by their daring and repeated tumults. In one of the momentary fits of reconciliation which took place between the leaders of the different factions, without any of the forms of trial, they thrust Chouiski into a monastery; and after stripping him of the robes of majesty, and compelling him to assume the monastic tonsure, they delivered him in that state to the Poles, who sent him to Warsaw¹¹, where he languished out the remainder of his days, odious

⁹ Williams, p. 67.; Voltaire, *Hist. Gen.* tom. v. p. 168.; *Russian Impostor*, p. 150—152.

¹⁰ Olearius, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 270.

¹¹ A brief Historical Relation of the Empire of Russia, p. 19. If we are to believe Mr. Williams, he was poisoned, p. 68.

to himself, and contemptible to mankind by his unprofitable crimes. The impostor, although abandoned by the Poles, might now perhaps have reaped the harvest of his toils, had not Ouroussoff¹², a Tatar prince, killed him, to revenge the murder of his friend.

The boyars then offered their turbulent kingdom to prince Vladislaus, heir of Sigismond king of Poland; their greatest families of note having become extinct in this scene of woe and massacre; but while he was slowly preparing to take possession, a fourth Deme-^{1611.} trius suddenly entered the lists with him for the regal prize.

His pretensions, like those who had assumed the name before him, were coined in the mint of absurdity. Sidor, deacon of a convent in Moscow, (for such were the name and rank of this impostor,) published to his countrymen, that God had preserved him from the snares of Boris, the conspiracy of Chouiski, and the assassination of Ouroussoff; and numbers were found willing to depart from the evidence of their sense and sight, to believe these "three miracles"¹³. The city of Pleiskow owned him for their Czar;

¹² Le Clerc, tom. ii. p. 519—521.

¹³ "Il trouva des partisans qui crurent ces trois miracles," are the lively words of the sarcastic Voltaire; Hist. Gen., tom. v. p. 169.

but a confederacy, in the end, being formed against him by some of his warmest profelytes, he was arrested, and executed on a tree for his presumption. There yet remained a fifth, the son of the second impostor, Nagui. On the death of her pretended husband, Marina retired with her infant to the Cossacks, under whose protection she remained until the success of the Russian arms brought her and her son to the capital. In the innocence of a child not three years old, a multitude of crimes was found. He was strangled by the furious insanity of the people; the more guilty mother was thrown into prison, where she soon terminated her existence, a deplorable, though unpitied example of disappointed ambition¹⁴.

The eye aches in surveying the vast and uniform picture of horror and blood which Russia presented in the midst of this train of impostors. We must again express our satisfaction that we are not obliged to wade gradually through this hideous scene of slaughter; it is sufficient for our purpose briefly to observe, that the Russians repented of their late submission to the yoke of the Poles, who,

¹⁴ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 414, 415. According to the assertion of Voltaire and the author of the Russian Impostor, she and her son were drowned; Hist. Gen. tom. v. p. 168.; Russ. Impost. p. 243.

elated with their power, soon began to exercise their cruelties on the natives. Mutiny generally presses very close on the footsteps of discontent: the signal oppression of the Poles stationed about Moscow, soon brought the people to shout out the words of rebellion. The sanguinary Poles calculated, that to crush that monster in its birth, it would cost them the fatigue of massacring about an hundred thousand inhabitants of Moscow¹⁵, and of pillaging all its monasteries, churches, and palaces¹⁶. But they were most fatally deceived in their bloody reckoning; for shortly afterwards the renowned Pojarski of Kazan, who may be justly styled one of the deliverers of Russia (after fighting many glorious battles), by the assistance of Chermetof of Yaroslaf, a considerably body of troops, and most horrible famine¹⁷, compelled them

¹⁵ Tooke, vol. i. p. 322. See likewise Lacombe, p. 82. Mr. Williams lessens this immense sum of human destruction to somewhat more than to the amount of ten thousand; but his calculations are not always to be trusted.

¹⁶ When we read in the voyage of the correct Olearius, "*Que les foldats y firent tant de butin, qu'il y en eût qui chargèrent leur pistolets de grosses perles rondes;*" what an idea does he convey to us of the unbounded treasures of Moscow, and of the wanton extravagance of its depredators the Poles! tom. i. liv. iii. p. 273.

¹⁷ A brief Historical Relation of the Empire of Russia, p. 21. According to the evidence of this author, a spectator and sufferer in the general distress, a loaf of bread was some-

them to renounce all hopes of residing again in the capital and in the empire.

Then the Russians (after they had sent an embassy to Sweden to offer the crown to one of the sons of Charles the ninthth, king of Sweden, who was sagacious enough to seize Kexholm, and even Novgorod, in the convulsions of this interregnum) felt at last the necessity of restoring the public order and tranquillity, by the election of a sovereign, who, unlike the hostile Swede and Pole, would study to settle the jarring parts of the constitution by counsels of wisdom, and by burying all sentiments of civil enmity in the bosom of peace. The estates now assembled at Moscow, for this truly wise and patriotic design. They were composed of the boyars, and other officers of the household of the prince, the Voyevodes, the

times sold in the siege for a thousand rubles, equal then to 500 l. sterling. From the same weighty authority we learn, p. 23. that on the recapture of the city, some Russian commanders seized upon large chests, under the strong hope of discovering some hidden treasure, but which being broke open, they found to be entirely filled with the carcases of men slain to appease their raging hunger. This siege may be said to constitute an æra in the history of Russian famine, not to be surpassed, if equalled, by the complicated miseries which Rome endured when she received the first visit of the destroying Goths.

²⁸ Strahlenberg, p. 210.

infant boyars of cities, the merchants, the citizens, and the proprietors of land. The number of deputies was unfixed; and the cities had the privilege of selecting and sending those men, who had merited their esteem and confidence¹⁹.

The national assembly was at first tumult- 1613,
 tuous and unmanageable: their late popular disturbances had diffused such a spirit of guile, self-interest, and contradiction into the breasts of the members, that it required some time to reverse these pernicious principles, and to establish peace, order, and moderation. At length Michael Fedorovitz of the house of Romanof, a youth of sixteen and a native of Russia, though of Prussian extraction, was called from the convent to ascend the vacant throne, by the unanimous consent of this august assembly. The memory of their past calamities would have taught the boyars the absolute necessity of placing a more vigorous character on the throne than the youthful Michael, if they had not been firmly assured that his inexperience would be directed by his father, the archbishop of Rostof, who it may be remembered had assumed the name of

¹⁹ Levesque, tom. v. p. 1, 2. Mr. Tooke's ideas seem to clash very much with Levesque in the legal composition of this assembly which disposed of the crown. See View of the Russian Empire, vol. ii. p. 369, 370, &c.

Philaretos from the oppression of Boris, and from whose eminent virtues all ranks expected soon to obtain a speedy end to those divisions, tumults, rebellions, and assassinations, which had so long distracted every part of the Russian empire. A change of rulers is sometimes but a change of servitude; but when it is recollected that the great Peter sprung from this new family, we may hail the accession of Michael as the settlement of domestic peace and union, and the happy opening of permanent civilization.

*A concise Review of the Manners and Customs of the
Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.*

THROUGH a long and rugged path of revolutions, we at last reach to a glorious eminence on which can be distinctly seen the morning star of civility and science arising in gradual splendour above the gloomy horizon of Russia. On this happy spot we shall pause for a while to survey, with a calm and steady eye, the manners and customs of a people whose public actions we have already contemplated, and to expose with an impartial hand their erroneous opinions, before we again enter the beaten track of foreign and domestic bloodshed.

In cold or temperate climates, a philosophic eye will most be gladdened with a full view of the majestic fabric of freedom and independence: there the constitution of man is most vigorous, and there the mind glows with a warm love of national liberty and military enterprize; and he must be repeatedly assailed by force and cunning, before he can tolerate with patience any of the abuses of tyranny.

The

The geographical situation of Russia amply embraced all these natural advantages, and the ancient institutions of her sons did not tend to subjugate the manly spirit of public freedom. That the principles of that liberty which their climate and laws breathed into them might not wither and expire from the want of proper cultivation, the 'respectable inhabitants of each city daily assembled towards noon at the market-place, discussed the great interests of the state, introduced the mild virtues of social life, boldly practised what they thought, and proudly indulged themselves in uttering the sentiments of independence. To this meeting of patriotism and virtue, the young men were accustomed to repair; and their absence was indignantly felt, and deservedly chided: here they were trained up to virtue and justice: here the wisdom of years opened their minds to warm impressions of courage and activity in the service of their country: and the authority which these untutored orators derived from their personal achievements, served alike to enforce obedience and to give emulation to their youthful auditors. While the hearts of both young and old were endowed with such a

• Tooke, vol. i. p. 367. Levesque, tom. iii. p. 182.

nice sensibility of honour, that it seems to have shed its influence on every private and public action of their life; their custom of never concluding a bargain without the exclamation, "If I keep not my word, may it prove my disgrace!" is strongly expressive of their high sense of that dignified passion². We should also be inclined to think that a people displaying such manly virtues, could in no age or condition be enslaved, if the history of ancient times did not remind us of the degeneracy of an Athens and a Sparta, and the officious zeal of our memory place before us the reign of Ivan the Terrible.

The rigid moralist, who delights to inveigh against all the refinements of life, and to call them by the hateful name of luxury, will find no scope for his favourite topic in the habitations of the ancient Russians. In the construction of their edifices they paid no

² In their wish to decry the character of the Russians some writers have even affirmed, that they had no word to express honour; they err, the word *ubest* fully displays its meaning. See a note of Levesque, tom. iii. p. 183. The great Frederic of Prussia exhibits but a mean and imperfect picture of historical research, when he declares, that such was the barbarity of Peter and his whole nation, that they could not find any expression in the compass of their language indicative of honour and fidelity. See *Histoire de la Maison de Brandebourg*.

² Fletcher, p. 14—66.

attention

attention to ornament, and very little to convenience. On the outside of their square⁴ and miserable dwellings (for in their structure could be seen neither stones, nor bricks, nor tiles) was fixed a small ladder, by which they ascended their domestic apartments: the walls of the chambers were surrounded with benches, which answered the double purposes of seats and beds: but during the severity of winter they slept on their stoves⁵. For, till the time of the great Peter, a bed was scarcely to be seen even in the palaces of the great; while, to fortify themselves against the cold, their windows were so small, and their doors so low, that it was necessary to stoop in order to enter them⁶.

To follow writers in their tedious detail of minute circumstances, would be foreign to our work, whose object is only to mark the prominent features of their customs, manners, and characters; yet two circumstances deserve to be selected from this subordinate information, as the first serves to betray their attachment to the Greek custom, and the

⁴ Moscov. Comment. cap. viii. p. 71, 72.

⁵ Relation Curieuse de la Moscovie, p. 11. Hackluyt, vol. i. p. 254, 255.

⁶ Herbestein, p. 40. Guagnini, p. 189.

other

other to illustrate their minds. The men occupied the front of the house, while despotic jealousy removed the women to the most sequestered part of the building: this disposition of the females will call to the recollection of the classical mind the gynæceon of the Greeks; while the highest mark of esteem and confidence which a Russian could confer on a friend or stranger, was shewn in an introduction to his painted wife¹. The laws of Russian courtesy sanctioned the respectful freedom of a kiss on the lips²; but the consequences might be fatal to either of them, if they had presumed to give this chaste salute without his consent.

If we examine with attention the domestic state of any nation where civilization appears in the season of infancy, we shall observe, that there man usurps the most arrogant sway over woman; and that conjugal union, which among polished nations inclines the heart to softness and humanity, from the benign influence of moral causes³, exposes her in a
barbarous

¹ The Captain Margeret says in his *Estat de l'Empire de Russie*, p. 16. "Elles se fardent toutes, mais fort grossièrement, & tiennent que c'est une honte de ne se farder, soit vieille ou jeune, riche ou pauvre."

² Olearius, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 231.

³ "L'homme feroce," observes that truly original and elegant writer M. Thomas, "ne connoissant presque que le physique

barbarous state to every office of fatigue and labour, and to every species of cruel oppression.

"Excluded from society, fixed in the most remote and solitary apartments, and humbled to complete subjection by their tyrannical masters, to sow and spin were the principal occupations of the Russian wives; they had not even the consolation of exercising a proper controul in the functions of domestic œconomy; every trifling circumstance contributed to render their bonds mortifying and intolerable: they approached their lords with the most reverential awe, while these savages, proud of excelling their helpless partners in corporeal strength, were ever ready to strike them on the slightest offence, when this brutal propensity should have been checked by their supplicating

physique de l'amour, & n'ayant aucune de ces idées morales, qui seules adoucissent l'empire de la force, accoutumé par ses mœurs à la regarder comme la seule loi de la nature, commande despotiquement à des êtres que la raison fit ses égaux, mais que la foiblesse lui assujettit." See his *Philosophique Essai sur le Caractère, les Mœurs, & l'Esprit des Femmes dans les différens Siècles*, p. 7, 8. in the fourth tome of his works.

⁴⁰ Guagnini, p. 180. *De Rebus Moschoviticis*, lib. iii. cap. xxii. p. 230. *Moscov. Comment.* cap. xvi. p. 101, 102. *Carlisle Embassies*, p. 51, 52.

counte-

countenance. In a country where wild and gloomy superstition has fixed its favourite seat, the devotions of the people are both frequent and various: yet the Russians rarely suffered the gates of the church¹² to be opened to their wives, and the glowing bloom of health soon left their youthful cheeks from close confinement¹³. Some husbands, however, allowed their wives to partake of different recreations in the plain adjacent to the town¹⁴. Here, for a time, liberty was the only law, pleasure the only pursuit; here they enjoyed the lively dance, and those other amusements which impart a temporary relief to the sorrows of the heart; yet this transient happiness must still have been embittered by the remembrance and return of imprisonment.

The dominion of love was here stifled in its cradle by the most oppressive customs: the growth of this passion between the two sexes

¹² *Relatione del Regno di Moscovia*, Bib. Reg. 14 a xiii. Mus. Brit. p. 405.

¹³ "Sono grandemente gelosi universalmente delle loro donne, e pochi le lasciano andar fuori, e non senza causa." See *Relatione de Moscovia*, scritta da Raffaello Barberino, Ven. 1565, p. 10. We are not surprised to see this complaint from the mouth of an amorous Italian.

¹⁴ Herbestein, p. 35.

is nourished by acts of kindness and tender gallantries, which the one may offer and the other receive, by the united consent of virtue, reason, and honour. But the Russian dispensed with every previous display of tenderness and affection; he could be content to behold his wife almost for the first time in the marriage bed¹⁴: thus was his heart steeled against those emotions of love and friendship, which give such durable charms to this first institution of social life. By the contrivance of aged matrons, called by the Russians *fwakbas*,¹⁵ or *inspectors*, the bond of this unequal connection was imposed, but which could be broken by the friendly arm of divorce; though they laboured to conceal their frequent use of this mutual remedy, as they knew it was condemned by the laws of the Greek church¹⁶.

The nuptial bond could be with difficulty tied three times¹⁷; a fourth marriage exposed

¹⁴ Fletcher, p. 102.; Carlisle's Embassies, p. 52, 53.; Margeret, p. 16.; Olearius, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 236.

¹⁵ See Dissertations sur les Antiquités de Russie, p. 134.; and Religion Ancienne & Moderne, p. 89—99.

¹⁶ Moscov. Comment. cap. xv. p. 98—100.

¹⁷ "Tertiam uxorem ducere, sine gravi causa non permittunt." Herbestein, p. 35.; see also De Religione Russo-rum, p. 270. "Mais on ne permet point que l'on passe à de quatrièmes nœces, & le prêtre qui les auroit benites seroit chassé." Olearius, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 235.

the priest who performed the ceremony to all the thunders of ecclesiastical power ; and we behold at once the full despotism of Ivan, in daring to embrace five wives : yet these multiplied associations were equally offensive to the people, and under a less powerful prince the latent spark of their discontent might have kindled into a mighty flame. We cannot close these observations on the deplorable servitude of the women without remarking, than whenever their complicated injuries drove them to seek the blood of their domestic tyrants, the law was most unequal and inhuman ; their terrible and lingering punishment was, to be interred in the ground to the height of their necks¹⁸, and, in this painful and ignominious condition, a vigilant guard prevented compassion from finishing their agonies by the charitable stroke of death.

By these refinements of cruelty, the lives of some of these females have been prolonged to a week¹⁹, and under the incle-

¹⁸ “ *Fæminæ conjugio parricidio infames, tolli quidem è medio variis mortibus solent ; usitatio tamen est, ut vivæ in terram defodiunt.*” De Rebus Moschov. lib. ii. cap. xxiii. p. 148.

¹⁹ This punishment existed even in the reign of Peter. See Corneille le Bruyn, *Voy. en Moscov.* vol. i. p. 26. ; Motley’s *Life of Peter*, vol. i. p. 174. ; and Perry’s *Account of Russia*, Lond. 1718, p. 201., &c. This last writer tells us, that he has known them to have lived seven or eight days in this posture.

mency of this severe climate. The crimes of these wretched women may in some degree be palliated by the voice of hopeless slavery and perpetual suffering. Those who are the most destitute of feeling, cannot applaud the humanity of such a legislature; and our readers will be shocked to find, that the odious and criminal imperfection of the ancient laws of Russia permitted the life of the woman to be taken with impunity by the caprice or passions of the arbitrary husband²⁰.

Most animals of prey have an instinctive fondness for their infant progeny, while more enlightened man cherishes his offspring from the double force of nature and of reason; yet the child, like his unhappy mother, groaned under the iron rod of domestic oppression: neither age, nor rank, nor employment, could place it beyond the reach of parental power; its real or imaginary indiscretions might be chastised with the knout²¹, by its unnatural father, or by the hands of his servants: nor was the parent open to the guilt or punishment of murder if the child expired under

²⁰ The reader may be almost tempted to forget himself, and to think he is viewing the domestic behaviour of the savages of America, instead of the Russians of the sixteenth century. See the close resemblance in the *Œuvres Philosophiques de Pauw*, tom. i. p. 77. and in other parts of that bold and opinionative work.

²¹ De Reb. Moschov. lib. iii. cap. xxiii. p. 232.

these

these flagellations: while their penury or covetousness could dispose of them four times²²; but after the fourth sale, the unfeeling law no longer confounded children with the moveables of their father's house. Can it excite our astonishment, then, to behold them treating their parents with all the cold indifference of strangers when they had unloosed the fetters of filial subjection: we should indeed express our surprize if the son could nourish the sentiments of love for the father, after that strong tie of nature had been so much weakened by paternal unkindness.

The feelings of a refined people are but little touched by the spectacle of funereal pomp; and we put on the ensigns of grief, and adjust the ceremonial of death, with a composure little honourable to the head and heart, and by no means corresponding to the awful solemnity of the occasion. The less polished Russians were not exempt from this species of human apathy: three²³ days after the decease of the person, his body was profusely scented before it was deposited in the tomb. On the day of interment a groupe of

²² "Post quartam autem venditionem nihil juris amplius in filium habet." Guagnini, p. 186.; Moschov. Comment. cap. xi. p. 80.; Herbestein, p. 36.

²³ La Religion Ancienne & Moderne des Moscovites, p. 138.

hired mourners, chiefly consisting of females, moved along in slow procession before the body, weeping, and exhibiting the most excessive demonstrations of sorrow²⁴. To the priest was committed the image of that saint which idolatrous custom had presented to the deceased for the patron of his baptism. This symbol of superstition accompanied its former possessor almost to the place of his destination, while these retainers of sorrow frequently propitiated the wooden image in these accents of supplication; "O Lord, let thy tender mercy extend to his soul;" the devout zeal of the parents and friends imprinted their fervent kisses on the hallowed idol, and the priests closed the ceremony by placing two written prayers²⁵ between the hands of the deceased. This acting train of females then eased their troubled breasts with complaints and lamentations at once so singular and grievous, as would have distressed the studied gravity of a stranger²⁶, had he been permitted

²⁴ De Reb. Moschov. lib. iii. cap. xxiii. p. 232.

²⁵ The form of these prayers, which the ignorance of some writers have denominated passports, is to be found in that learned work of Dr. King on the Greek Church, p. 358, 359, 360.

²⁶ "Non lasciano entrare forastieri alcuno nelle Chiese loro," says Barberino, in his *Relatione de Moscovia*, p. 8.: but his money however relaxed the rigour of Russian superstition.

to have witnessed these sorrowful ceremonies : “ Wherefore ” art thou dead, ” exclaimed these frantic women to the corpse ; “ did not riches sufficiently increase thy stock of happiness ? was not the favour of thy prince equivalent to your expectations ? did not thy wife possess all the charms of beauty ? thy infants, did they not call up the most flattering hopes ? we therefore repeat once more, Why art thou dead ? ” These questions, their tears, and cries, redoubled as the body was descending into the grave. But with this last office to the dead ²⁷, their theatrical exhibition terminated ; and on the edge of the grave these representatives of woe soon after pacified their hungry stomachs with meat brought for that purpose, without the smallest dejection of look or inquietude of heart. Six weeks the Russians were clad in all the trappings of external grief ²⁸ ; when that period had passed, these established modes of sorrow were again renewed, with the same concern, and with the same conclusion. The tear or the smile might appear on the cheek of the philosopher,

²⁷ Margeret, p. 11. *De Religione Russorum*, &c. p. 244.

²⁸ Perhaps, strictly speaking, the *ασταγμος*, or kiss, was the last remarkable ceremony performed to the deceased by the priest, his relations, and friends. See King on the Greek Church, p. 338.

²⁹ *La Relation Curieuse de la Moscovie*, p. 30.

according to his nature, at this eternal departure of human life.

Among nations just emerging from the depths of barbarism, the servile spirit of imitation will for a time impede their greatest and simplest undertakings. From the long and peculiar connection which Russia had formed with oriental nations, she had derived many of her commercial regulations. In "conformity to their practice, all the shops in the cities were placed in an inclosure, called *Gostinnoi-dvor* or court of merchants, which may be said to correspond with the *bazar* of the Asiatics". But to enter into a minute detail of the various articles of merchandize which filled these places would be incompatible with our work; we shall therefore briefly observe, that every thing which could gratify the eye, delight the sense, or diffuse plenty and external comfort, might be purchased in these stationary abodes of commerce.

³⁰ Commerce is generally allowed to be highly instrumental to the greatness of a state,
and

³⁰ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 199, 200.

³¹ Le Bruyn expressly calls them Bazars. Voy. en Moscou. vol. i. p. 20.

³² Plato however gives it as his opinion, that a well-formed republic should seek no commercial intercourse, nor endeavour to extend their sway under a naval power. He also pronounces it to have been preferable for the interests of
of

and the happiness of its subjects; it will always therefore meet with a certain degree of encouragement and protection from a wise government. "The merchants of Russia formed a respectable body of the empire, and their ancient and present condition composes the base of that pyramid of rank which has been reared by the different orders of the state"; but time, ill-policy, and oppression, have robbed them of their important prerogatives. Esteemed as the constituent parts of the government, they had once the valuable privilege of voting at those national assemblies of their old turbulent freedom: but the wish and hope of resuming their former rights are now utterly extinguished by the plenitude of despotism, and the accumulation of wealth.

A country where the union of the two sexes is promoted, and where labour prevails,

of Athens, for them to have continued annually to send the sons of seven of their chief citizens, to pacify the appetite of the Minotaur, than to have renounced their antique manners, and to have rendered themselves great and powerful by sea. Platonis Opera, Francofurti 1602. De Legibus, lib. iv. p. 826, 827. But the greatness of his name cannot entitle these crude notions to the respect and obedience of a modern age.

³³ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 192.

³⁴ From the despotism of Russia, the people have lost all pretensions to the rights of freemen, and consequently cannot be reckoned to possess any political influence in the state.

will soon efface the casual ravages of pestilence and war ; while the steps of a nation to agricultural perfection must be equally slow and defective, where the rough child of industry toils, without the sweat of his brow being rewarded by the comforts of personal freedom and personal property". To the eternal disgrace of Russia, in approaching the zenith of her glory, she forged and riveted the fetters of servitude on that unhappy condition of men, called the boors. Before the close of the sixteenth, and opening of the seventeenth century, the rights of the peasant were respected. Over all the lands, the nobleman possessed, and still possesses an exclusive dominion ; yet necessity compelled him to hire the boors to till the ground, as they were then considered the most useful and cheap instruments of husbandry. ³⁵ Six days of the week were devoted to the service of their master :

³⁵ " Privé de toute espèce de propriété, quel intérêt auroit-il à l'augmentation des récoltes, à l'amélioration des terres ?" is the just, though obvious question of M. de Marbault, in his *Essai sur le Commerce de Russie*, p. 24. The sage and liberal mind of the second Catharine nobly feels the servitude of her people, when she declares in her instructions, &c. pour le Nouveau Code de Loix, p. 83 ; " L'Agriculture ne pourra jamais prospérer là où l'agriculteur ne possède rien en propre."

³⁶ " Sex dies coloni in septimanâ dominis suis colorant, septimus verò dies privato labori concedit." Guagnini, p. 179. *Moscov. Comment.* p. 80.

the

the seventh might be employed to reap the fruits of their own industry. But the hardships of their dependent state could be alleviated by a continual change of masters, by the liberty of entering the cities to employ themselves in domestic duties, or by the free choice of applying their labours to any undertakings in which they were most likely to succeed³⁷. So far the laws of political justice softened the rigour of their fate, and the boors enjoyed the highest share of freedom that the spirit of a despotic government could admit; while none worked at the oar of constant slavery; except those Tatars and Cossacks whom the chance of war had thrown into their hands, or those degenerate Russians who voluntarily sold themselves to a second master after the death of the first had, as was ordinarily understood, emancipated them from the ties of obedience³⁸.

But when the establishment of a regular army paved the way to order and control; when the refractory no longer despised the power of royalty, and the sword of the people was girt on at the sole expence of the chief magistrate, a capitation tax was imposed by the new system of administration;

³⁷ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 192.

³⁸ Guagnini, p. 179. Moscov. Comment. p. 89.

but

but many unforeseen disadvantages emanated from this institution. By the regulation of this new edict, the nobleman paid for his lands, and the boor for his house ; yet as the moderation of the law was then satisfied with the condition of the boors, without wishing to deprive them of all political existence, they indulged their propensity to roving, to the no small detriment of the state : her revenues were of course enriched or diminished by their stay or departure from their places of abode. To check an evil so formidable, the Czar Fedor, under the advice of his prime minister Boris, prohibited these excursions, and reiterated the interdiction in fifteen hundred and ninety-seven : when Boris, however, had climbed the hill of greatness by those arts of dissimulation, which he never laid aside after he had mounted the throne, his imperious nature was constrained to silence the loud voice of prejudice, and to obliterate the memory of past injuries by many temporising acts ; among others, he restored the boors to their former privileges, under the popular notion, that the late acts of his predecessor contributed to introduce the badge of servitude among his fellow-creatures.

The fears of Chouiski induced him to steer a middle course between these opposite extremes ;

tremes ; but the unceasing tumult of civil discord offers neither leisure nor materials for the accomplishment of any salutary design. The steady persevering genius of his successors, assisted by the concurrence of many fortunate circumstances, broke through every barrier which the wholesome provision of former laws had placed for the personal guard of this despised race of men. Thus, by degrees, did their unrelenting enemies invade and destroy the fortress of their immunities, until they were at last chained to the soil which they cultivated, and together with it were transferred from one proprietor to another by sale or conveyance, like so many beasts of burthen ”.

In one instance the legislature of Russia in the sixteenth century is to be praised, for shewing a favourable disposition to the security and comfort of servants, who served by contract for an agreed time ; a tribunal³⁹ was established for the express purpose of receiving their contracts, and invested with authority to administer equal justice, whenever any contention arose between the parties concerning the nature or duration of their agreement. The good effects of this institution

³⁹ Tooke, vol. i. p. 369.

⁴⁰ Levesque, tom. iii. p. 193. Tooke, vol. i. p. 368.

were

were soon felt, and announced by the lower class of people: it compounded the severity of aristocratical oppression by a suitable alloy of popular freedom; it opened to the servant the liberty of complaint, and the hopes of redress; while it curbed the encroachments and cruelties of the masters over an unprotected part of the community, who had formerly no active guardian of their rights and privileges, and whom arrogance and prepossession had almost refused to reckon among the human species.

The laws which regulate the apparel of a nation are sometimes frivolous, sometimes pregnant of endless controversies⁴¹, and sometimes productive of an influence on the manners of a government, which is no less extensive than beneficial. The edicts which related to the dress of the Russians are characterized by attention, discernment, and pru-

⁴¹ The truth of this second observation may be witnessed in the history of our country. The violent contest between the clergy and people for the wearing of the long-pointed shoes, which preposterous mode first appeared in the reign of Rufus, affords to a philosophic mind a most striking example of a superstitious age, so long disputing the opinions and opposing the commands of the church. See Hume's History of England, vol. i. p. 302.; and his fine remark on the fruitless attempt of the clergy to abolish this *impious* fashion; and Andrew's History of Great Britain, connected with the chronology of Europe, vol. i. p. 440.

dence⁴². Each order of men was discriminated by a peculiar habit. The man of hereditary wealth and illustrious ancestors was forbidden, by the proud distinctions of the law, to wear a dress unbecoming the dignity of his station; while the promiscuous multitude could not appear in precious robes without being subject to various and heavy penalties. These distinctions of rank and persons precluded the vain insolence of wealth from ascending above the level of its fellow-citizens. Nor was this inflexible gradation of classes less serviceable to that fatal species of pride which leads man to exhaust the sources of his opulence in surpassing his equals by a more profuse and splendid luxury; for the immoderate rigour of the law against those who contracted debts which they were unable to discharge, kept the citizens from launching into needless expences. Their punishment certainly did not equal that of the Roman debtor, whose creditors, by the unnatural severity of the twelve tables, might put him to death at the end of sixty days, sell him to foreign servitude, or divide his body⁴³.

Yet

⁴² Moscov. Comment. cap. vii. p. 73. Guagnini, p. 181. De Reb. Moscov. lib. iii. p. 192.

⁴³ "Ut in xii tabulis debitoris corpus in creditores dividit licuit;"—"but," adds Quintilian, for the honour of Roman humanity, "quam legem mos publicus repudiavit." See his

Yet the blows which they received with a club on the calf of their leg, and under the sole of their foot, until the payment was made, were perhaps, in the end, no less conducive to the loss of life. If they were insolvent, the cruelty of the law resigned their wives and children to the entire disposal of the creditors⁴⁴.

In the days of liberty and happiness every citizen could bequeath his possessions to his children or friends. But in those reigns, where oppression unsheathed its sword to extend the royal power, the testaments of the dead were violated by the avarice and injustice of the sovereigns. Riches exposed their possessor to every species of persecution. The execution of the law was no less venal than tyrannical. The informers became the enemies and accusers of every family of fortune; and the degenerate zeal of the judges confiscated their estates to the use or rather abuse of their worthless prince⁴⁵.

his admirable book, *Institutiones Oratoriæ*, Ven. 1471. lib. iii. cap. iii. See likewise Aulus Gellius, *Lug. Batav.* 17c6; edit. Gronov. lib. xx. cap. i. p. 871, 872.

⁴⁴ *De Reb. Moschov.* lib. iii. cap. xxiii. p. 147, 148. Fletcher, p. 52. Hackluyt, vol. i. p. 252. Olearius, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 327. *Relation Curieuse de la Moscovie*, p. 57.

⁴⁵ Guagnini, p. 179. *Relation Curieuse de Moscovie*, p. 32. Levesque, tom. iii. p. 195.

It was the policy of Russia to encourage, among the lower ranks of her people, every exercise which might tend to increase their strength, courage and skill. Among other trials of activity and force, the Russian youth were accustomed to dispute with each other the prize of superior valour and dexterity in the pugilistic art ⁴⁶. On appointed days, an innumerable concourse of spectators assembled in the fields, to behold these ferocious trials of juvenile skill and prowess. The hands of the Russian were not armed for these contests with the celebrated *cæstus* of the Greeks, composed of raw hides lined with metal, but their athletic sports and labours must have imparted to their large and muscular limbs such a kind of sinewy strength as did not require any artificial assistance. These desperate exhibitions, so grateful to the taste and temper of the times, were never concluded without the loss of an eye or tooth to one of the combatants; and fortunate was he who escaped from the lists without the reception of a mortal blow.

From these sanguinary recreations, which were encouraged from the fallacious idea that they contributed to teach some important

⁴⁶ Herbestein, p. 38. Guagnini, p. 181. Carlisle's Embassies, p. 54. Moscov. Comment. cap. viii. p. 75.

lessons in the school of war, it is natural to pass on to the consideration of the military art. That passion of revenge which always blazes with such unremitting rage in a nation little removed from its primitive barbarism; with other local causes, conspired to expose the Russians to the constant hardships of war. From "the slumbers of fatigue, from the pleasures of the table, from concerns of great moment, the nobles, who were compelled to serve in the army, arose with equal alacrity and obedience, whether the prince called upon them to suppress the flames of domestic rebellion, or to stop the career of a foreign foe; and they seized their arms with such a savage fury, as plainly manifested they fought not more to conquer than to destroy.

The front of a Russian army discovered that the predilection for warfare among them had not sharpened or improved their faculties in the invention of offensive and defensive weapons. "The bow, the javelin, the lance, the sword, and the battle-axe, were their ordinary instruments of annoyance. The helmet and coat of mail composed their military dress; with these arms their cavalry was contented.

⁴⁷ Guagnini, p. 177. Moscov. Comment. p. 79, 80.

⁴⁸ Margeret, p. 26. See also a curious book intitled,

"*Diversarum Gentium Armatura Equestris*," 1575.

Their

Their infantry was but an undisciplined and tumultuary assemblage of vassals, until the first Ivan collected and grasped the scattered fragments of the empire. The constitution of their horses was admirably adapted to the nature of their service; during "two whole days they betrayed no inconvenience from the want of nourishment; and when the shrill trumpet of war summoned these serviceable animals to the field, for two months they could perform the duties of flight and pursuit with proper excellence, without requiring any other food than the unpalatable branches and barks of the trees. Unrestrained by the maxims of coolness, the impatient Russians pressed forward to the battle with furious shouts and irregular ranks; but as their powers were only formidable on the first onset, they were ignorant how to rally or to retire; a repulse produced defeat, and defeat was commonly accompanied with entire destruction".

Among a people whose advances in every science were extremely dilatory and imperfect in comparison with other nations of the

⁴⁹ Hackluyt, vol. i. p. 250.

⁵⁰ "Hostem primo impetu audacissime aggrediuntur, nec diu perseverant; ac si innuere vellent, fugite, aut nos fugiemus." Herbestein, p. 36.; see likewise Moscov. Comment. cap. xvi. p. 132.

same period, we cannot expect them to be acquainted, much less perfected in any of the learned and modern branches of military tactics; equally unskilled in the arts of constructing, besieging, and defending regular fortifications, the operations of their most skilful generals consisted in setting fire to the outerworks of the enemy, or reached only to the merit of waiting with an obstinate firmness, until the impregnable walls could no longer afford shelter from the approach of famine". The manœuvre in which they placed their greatest glory was to surround the foe, and then to fall upon his rear. Their patient" abstinence, productive of so many solid advantages in the doubtful events of war, and their robust constitutions" which could so well endure the severest cold, rarely subjected them to the incumbrance of military stores or baggage. Some faint rudiments of military science may be discernible in the division of their troops and in the method of their encampments; their armies were di-

³¹ Herbestein, p. 37.

³² Fletcher, p. 61. "Atque ideo hostem circumvenire à tergoque invadere p:æcipue student." Moscov. Comment. cap. xxvi. p. 133.

³³ Their usual food in the camp, according to Fletcher, was a kind of dried bread named by them *Sucharie*, with some store of meal which they mixed with water and made into balls or small lumps of dough, called *Tollockno*; p. 59.

vided into five different bodies ; the advanced guard, the right, the left wing, the body of the army, and the vanguard ; each of these divisions were separated from the other, but the generals were obliged, at the slightest warning, to join the main body of the army⁵⁴. Disorderly sallies and multiform ambuscades were the most conspicuous features in their imperfect system of war. Some of their stratagems however betray neither want of ingenuity nor poverty of judgment ; and, rude and uninformed as the minds of the Russians then were, they still shewed that it only required the hand of genius to draw aside the veil which concealed their virtues, to alter the mark of their characteristic feature. We shall select one instance from a number, to confirm this observation. Whenever they apprehended an incursion from their restless and intrepid foes the Tatars, they dispatched several scouts before them, who, from constant practice, had acquired the habit of directing their eyes to remote objects. These spies, after having placed themselves at an equal distance of ground from each other, ascended trees in order to descry the approach of the the enemy, The first who perceived his mo-

⁵⁴. Margeret, p. 23.

tions rode in full gallop to repeat the news to the second ; and by this prescribed and expeditious manner, the important intelligence was conveyed to the army ; and, on extraordinary occasions to Moscow⁵⁵.

Let therefore the candour of an enlightened age be willing to admit that the Russians would have made a greater progress to civilization, had not the powers of their mind and body been fettered by the most deplorable servitude ever recorded in the history of mankind : for when once they had shaken off the galling yoke of a herd of savages, when once they had contemplated themselves in the mirror of true reason and policy, when once the dormant vigour of their minds was roused and supplied with proper models and materials, we behold them all at once starting into conquest and renown. The abject slaves of the Tatars are nobly lost in the proud and civilized vanquishers of two heroes, whose victorious arms withstood and triumphed over the repeated shocks of the finest and best disciplined troops of Europe. Need we mention the well-known names of Charles of Sweden, and Frederick of Prussia⁵⁶ ? If therefore,

⁵⁵ Margeret, p. 24.

⁵⁶ In the memorable battle of Kunersdorff, the Russian valour proved so successful, that the Great Frederick trembled

fore, the martial soul and various genius of a Peter could transform a confused and spiritless multitude of peasants into soldiers, whose discipline, evolutions, exercises, fortified cities, and military engines, could vie with the most polished nations, we may indulge the pleasing hope, that the mild and shining virtues of an Alexander, in the pure and generous love of science and mankind, may fix the plants of national happiness and learning" on so firm a soil, as to remain immoveable amidst the storms of any future despotism.

THE writer who pursues the Russians from the sixteenth towards the completion of the seventeenth century, will still find his way obscured by the gloomy shades of superstition; he will still be under the painful ne-

bled for the safety of his capital. See Dr. Gillies's View of the reign of Frederick II. of Prussia, p. 301. ; and Dr. Towers's Memoirs of the Life and Reign of Frederick III. vol. ii. p. 241.

³⁷ M. l'Abbé d'Auteroche, in his Voyage en Sibirie, tom. ii. p. 356, 357. labours, very unhappily we think, to prove, that their want of genius is the effect of the sun and of the climate. A more liberal mind may perhaps be inclined to think, that the fairest fruits of genius and science will appear, as the dark clouds of despotism retire from Russia.

cessity of lamenting, that folly had usurped the mien and garb of philosophy, that the people were greater advocates for servitude than for liberty, and that the small flame of science was utterly extinguished by the blasts of civil contention. Until the close of this melancholy period, Peter had not wholly abjured the errors of inexperience. The wheels of government were moved by the hands of caprice and violence ; and of course until these statesmen were banished, the sentiments of all ranks were degraded, their courage enervated, and their talents depressed.

Almost in every age the intercourse between the throne and the church has been invariably amicable. Wise therefore were those men who, in times of darkness, engrafted their consequence on the public body of the church. In no age or country, we may venture to assert, was the episcopal character received with a more profound veneration, than among the turbulent sons of Russia. The modest virtues of the man were difficult to be discovered, much less to be preserved, in the pomp and power of the prelate. Called from monastic solitude⁵⁵, the chiefs

⁵⁵ The Russian patriarchs were in high estimation with the prince and the people ; they ranked next to the Czar, and

chiefs of the clergy became the spiritual and temporal counsellors of their sovereign⁵⁹; and they frequently sustained the former character with great advantage to the peace and happiness of the people. But the superstitious prejudices of their education had gained too strong a dominion over their mind, to enable them greatly to reform the national manners by a proper interpretation of the precepts of divine revelation. Fasts, vigils, prostrations, festivals, and processions, were held by them to constitute the most useful and conspicuous duties of religion. These absurdities were destined to supply the place of piety and meekness, of harmony and universal benevolence; and such has been the deep root which these unwholesome practices have taken, that they are still remembered by many a Russian who has been born in a more civilized period.

and were constantly consulted on the important affairs of the state; neither peace nor war were declared without their advice. Dr. King on the Greek Church, p. 437. See likewise Olearius on this subject, tom. iii. p. 363.

⁵⁹ The patriarch Nikon, the *Becket* of Russia, even ventured to excommunicate his sovereign Alexis, the father of the great Peter; to such a height had church authority arrived. See King on the Greek Church, p. 427.

The

The Russians⁶⁰ confessed and prayed before the picture of a saint with so pious an ardour, as might place them on an odious parallel with the ancient Inconoclasts; they were for ever employed in adorning their houses with these objects of their fondest devotion; the erection of an image could only be permitted within the altar of the church; and these blind votaries turned their backs on the liturgy, to be edified by the sight of mute and inanimate idols; while such was the ridiculous jealousy of the possessors of images, that none were suffered to address their vows to them without insult, reproach, and compensation. Whenever a Russian was tempted, in a clandestine interview, to kneel to the ecclesiastical patron of another, if discovered in the act by the owner of the precious saint, he was sure to be warned not to repeat the offence, but to procure some other god to whom he could address his prayers, without infringing on the right of others⁶¹. The enlightened judgment of the patriarch Nikon at last expelled these symbols

⁶⁰ Carlisle's *Embassies*, p. 70, 71. *De Religione Russo-rum*, p. 18. Olearius, liv. iii. p. 337. *Relatione de Moscov. de Raff. Barberino*, p. 8.

⁶¹ "Comparet sibi et ipse aliquem deum, quem ad libitum imploret alienis, non utatur." See Mayerberg, p. 28—87.

of paganism from the house of God ; yet by their profanation and downfall, the tree, and not the root of popular superstition, was destroyed.

The most torpid trembled, the most gentle shook with rage, and the most rational were scandalized at the entrance of a stranger into their church, who was known to be a heretic ; yet private abhorrence and passion were sometimes forced to yield to public interest. They disarmed themselves of their panoply of prejudices and scruples in favour of the jesuit Possevin. But this orthodox son of the papal see refused the rare honour which the respect of the Russians had granted so unwillingly, with a mind, the nerves of which were equally touched by the habits of another superstition ; he professed to have felt a secret horror at the bare idea of visiting any edifice of worship whose ministers were not consecrated to the service of the holy father⁶².

It is the genius of superstition, to entertain an implacable hatred to all those who scorn to bow before the phantoms of her terrific creation. The Russians, the faithful slaves of superstition, displayed an invincible repugnance to the society of a stranger. The La-

⁶² See Ant. Possev. Moscov. p. 33. The German ambassador Mayerberg requested this honour, but was refused. See Iter in Moschoviam, p. 22.

tins they stigmatized under the inapplicable name of *Bezbojni* or atheists⁶³. In this long night of their religious fanaticism the present age will however allow some merit to their religion, which did not constrain or seduce thoughtless young females to embrace a life of solitude and mortification as the price of eternal happiness: few were buried in the gloom of a closter, except widows, and those women whose husbands obliged them to abandon the virtues of a domestic life⁶⁴. Some, however, were compelled by the law to renounce the world; but amidst this class can only be numbered those women whose impure sins were detected by the jealous vigilance of their husbands⁶⁵.

In every government whose characteristic feature is superstition and incivility, the clergy have possessed a peculiar influence on the opinions of the lower order of the people, and the inflammatory eloquence of the pulpit has been known sometimes to have shaken the firmest foundations of the throne; the policy of the Russian princes resolutely discountenanced and punished the freedom of public preaching; familiar with no general

⁶³ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 138.

⁶⁴ Mayerberg, p. 32.

⁶⁵ Olcarius, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 248.

principles of political wisdom and justice, yet their personal safety taught them to know how much the passions of an illiterate audience are affected by the discourse of a man whom they recognize as the awful delegate of God. The arguments by which they silenced this sacred trumpet of discord, and sometimes of sedition, will not be deemed by impartial judges as entirely destitute of all reason. They emphatically urged that the establishment of the church owes its origin to the word of God, which is deposited in the sacred writings; and that the interpretations of theologicians have been the source of all those dissensions which have divided Christianity into so many national congregations⁶⁶; happy people, who in religious matters never betrayed a wish to wander into the mazes of endless controversies and metaphysical subtleties.

The deep-rooted prejudices of the Russians rendered them a long time strangers to those comforts and conveniences which give additional charms to the intercourse of social life. Under the reign of Alexis, wooden edifices still crowded the streets of his capital⁶⁷, which in their construction were alike devoid of har-

⁶⁶ Olearius, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 347, 348.

⁶⁷ Carlisle's Embassies, p. 33—135.

kin, fork, and knife". The coarse appetite of the Russian was little propitious to the progress much less perfection of the culinary art. In cold and boiled meats seasoned with vinegar and raw onions, abundance of dried fish, salads, and herbs, may be comprised the principal articles of their simple diet. Yet this repast, which might suit the palate of a hermit, and excite the praise of a stoic, was succeeded by such copious draughts of mead", the northern nectar", and of quass", as never failed to overpower their reason, and oftentimes served to inflame their passions to deeds of violence and bloodshed". Yet these accounts of the scanty meanness of their entertainments must be weighed with a cautious

" "Orbis, mappula, culter, & furcula, præter proceres, nullæ." He dwells with a malignant pleasure on the poverty and uncleanness of a Russian dinner, p. 19—36—42. See likewise Olearius, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 228, 229.

" "Medo liquor fermentatus, quam quassetz indigenæ appellant." See Janfonius, *Vetus Moscoviæ Descriptio. Urbium Septentrionalium Europæ Tabulæ*, Amst. 1657. Fol.

" The appropriate words of Warton, in his learned and ingenious history of English Poetry, vol. i. dissertation 1.

" The curious may see Dr. Guthrie's Instructions for the preparations of this favourite beverage of the Russians in the lxviiiith volume of the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London, for the year 1778, part. ii. p. 627, 628.

" "Ex immoderato quo Russi ardente bibendi studio provenit, ut in rixas, homicidia, aliaque scelera facile prolabantur." *Lysée*, p. 99.

suspicion.

suspicion. The Jesuit Possevin has declared, and in this case the testimony of an enemy is surely preferable to that of a friend, that the table of Ivan displayed the greatest luxury and magnificence; and our readers will recollect the reception of Chancellor confirms this assertion; whilst so alluring an example must have procured some imitators amidst his wealthy nobles⁷⁶. Perhaps the observation may be just, that these ambassadors, excluded from all social intercourse with the best houses, by the strong dislike of the Russians to foreigners, have exaggerated their mode of living with the pencil of prejudice or ignorance.

The common apparel of the Russians was only remarkable for coarseness, simplicity, and slovenliness. It was in days of ceremonies and in feasts of the court that they threw off that, to assume an attire which might emulate the gorgeous finery of the Asiatic. Gold and diamonds then gave a dazzling lustre to their valuable furs; those whom poverty hindered from calling such costly ornaments their own, yet contrived to maintain a no less glittering appearance in robes,

⁷⁶ In the magnificent entertainment given by Alexis to the Earl of Carlisle, there is no apparent decline of the national opulence and splendour. See *A Relation of Three Embassies*, p. 292.

bonnets, pelisses, cymitars, and chains of gold, borrowed from the wardrobe of the Czar; with which they decked their sturdy persons on festivals, embassies, and marriages. Yet if by any carelessness or design they lost, stole, or damaged their borrowed dress, the body and the purse were inevitably doomed to atone for the offence". For the punishment of the knoot, was a word which could be found with equal facility in the vocabulary of the highest and lowest Russian.

But Russia, in her present high state of wealth and splendour, must deplore the loss of those immense treasures which she possessed until the flames of civil war had consumed the person of Demetrius. A minute narrative of the general depredations of the Poles, when they proudly trod on the necks of the Russians, could be perused with little amusement and less instruction. One instance will therefore be sufficient to convey some idea of the great value of their plunder; their sacrilegious hands despoiled the principal church of Moscow" of the following

" *Sed caveat is, quicumque fuerit, ne mutuatas vestes laceret, aut commaculet; neve ex gemmis aliquam subtrahat, vel amittat, damnum enim quodcumque carâ æstimatione, rependere, et culpæ suæ, vel negligentæ pœnam, per fustuarium luere debebit.*" Mayerberg, p. 31. See also Guagnini, p. 181.

" *Levesque, tom. iv. p. 145.*

monu-

monuments of her idolatry: the statues of our Lord Jesus and his Twelve Apostles fashioned to the size of nature, and founded of the purest gold; a great number of tables of the richest materials and the most curious workmanship, and many consecrated vessels embossed with pearls and diamonds. In this pillage of the capital, a proper attention was also paid to the gold and jewels, which lay irregularly piled up in the treasury of the Czar⁷⁹.

The reader, who has thus far accompanied us, will perceive that the Russians, even of the highest distinction, were little conversant with any of those domestic conveniences which are so daily enjoyed by the people of middle ranks, in countries displaying all the arts which improve and adorn life. In the century under review, their chief luxury was derived from the use of their baths, which, as they so much contributed to their health, were to be found in every town for the indiscriminate accommodation of both sexes. Their peculiar construction, and the great use made of them in all seasons of the year, are two circumstances which merit descrip-

⁷⁹ Olearius, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 272.

tion. They were close rooms, heated with furnaces to a prodigious degree; and to increase the greater excitation of the vapours, cold water was occasionally cast upon the stove: several benches were fixed at some distance above each other, which yielded different degrees of heat. Upon these benches they stretched themselves in a state of perfect nakedness: after they had sufficiently sweated by means of these hot vapours, which were diffused all over the bath, their bodies were well washed with some warm water, or with some liquor, and rubbed over with herbs: to recruit their strength with some spirituous liquor was their next concern; for they were so much weakened by profuse perspiration, that sometimes they fell into a swoon. But Mayerberg, who is an accurate observer of the Russian customs when the clouds of prejudice do not obscure his sight, has remarked in his account of their baths, that when their bodies have been rubbed with a small bundle of beech leaves, and are in the most heated state from the effects of the vapour, they plunged into the river; and when it was frozen, they rubbed and cleaned themselves in the snow as with some soap, re-entered the baths, and repeatedly underwent this sudden change of heat and cold,

cold, without the least injury to the powers of the mind or body¹⁰.

As the native fierceness of the Russians was insensibly abated by the progress of civilization, some gleams of hope and comfort began to break in upon that domestic slave of imperious man, weak, helpless, and degraded woman. Though still under the scourge of that illiberal despotism which eastern jealousy had imposed, and Russian austerity followed, the various hardships of their condition were in some degree mitigated by the privilege of visiting the church and their nearest relatives: yet these enviable prerogatives were only communicated to the highest orders of the handsome and well-shaped Russians¹¹; the lower class of women were still used in the most cruel manner by their husbands: repeated blows were still the most flattering marks of confidence and esteem, which they received from their husbands; while such was their amazing patience, that a woman of masculine strength has repeatedly received the blows of

¹⁰ See, for this opposite relation of the effects of the baths, Carlisle's Embassies, p. 53, 54. Iter in Moscov. p. 46.

¹¹ Both Olearius, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 195. and the author of Carlisle Embassies, p. 40. style them handsome and well-proportioned: yet from a very paltry motive, Mayerberg can only allow himself to say, "nullo deturpentur nature defectu," p. 45.

her husband²², without the faintest murmur, much less offer of retaliation, which her passions might have so well pardoned, and commended as an act of justice. Our astonishment is therefore little excited, that these wretched outcasts of society, whenever invention procured them a temporary²³ escape from men, whose actions so much abused the civil authority, should swallow intoxicating liquors with as little decency and moderation as their husbands²⁴, and from the united spirit of revenge and wantonness, sometimes descend to the infamy of prostitutes.

²² The celebrated author of the *Lettres Persannes*, and several other writers would teach us to believe, that the Russian women imagined themselves slighted, unless they felt the stick of their husbands, and that each blow was regarded as an additional token of their love. But we cannot so readily consent to degrade the female sex in any part of the world.

²³ We transcribe, though we are slow to accredit, the following treatment of a woman, and the criminal laxity of the Russian law. A husband, after having unmercifully beat his wife, forced her to put on a shift dipt in Brandy, to which he set fire, and burnt her to death. The writer also adds, that no prosecution was commenced against the man for his wife's murder. See a *Voyage to the North*; Lond. 1706.

²⁴ "In hac enim re (drinking) si maritos non vincant, certe non sunt illis inferiores." *De Religione Russorum*, &c. p. 249.

Entombed in monasteries and palaces, the daughters of the Czars were for ever denied them the rational enjoyments of honourable love"; and such was the peculiar severity of their fate, that they were not only forced to violate the laws of nature, by a life of celibacy, but rarely indulged with the innocent visits of their kindred. Solitude is the parent of study, but their poor education could not unlock the countless treasures of sacred and profane learning to cheer the dull uniformity of their state. What did life then present to them? nought but a sorrowful youth, and long and horrible old age.

The hours of the Czarinas rolled heavily along, equally unacquainted as their daughters with the various pleasures of social life; even in the painful struggles of illness, they were still doomed to be tormented by the cruel and ridiculous jealousy of their husbands. When the wife of the Czar Alexis was attacked with a dangerous illness, he deprived the physician of ascertaining with any degree of precision the nature and extent of the disease, by excluding the light from the sick chamber, and commanding him to feel the pulse of his patient through a veil".

⁸³ De Reb. Moschov. lib. ii. cap. vi. p. 99. Mayerberg, p. 44.

⁸⁴ Mayerberg, p. 88.

The calumny, or ignorance of some French authors, have dared to insinuate suspicions by no means favourable to the honour of the Russian princes, and to the purity of their wives ; but from the ample fund of foreign and domestic materials which compose the history of Russia, we can collect no example which should teach us to believe, that any sovereign ever wilfully disgraced the honour of a husband, by suffering his wife, amidst the miseries of her sequestered state, to violate the chastity of her person.

The Russians, in a mistaken sense of their own importance, still entertained at the opening of the seventeenth century, an utter contempt of foreign arts, power, language, and manners. Confined to their own country, dazzled by the splendour, and sunk by the despotism of the Czar, they were accustomed to associate the idea of inferiority with that of stranger ; and the ambassadors of this nation of slaves, in the vain notions of the supremacy of their master, ever urged their claims to greater respect and distinction than those of other powers. We can pardon the vanity of the Greeks and Romans, in affixing the name of barbarians to strangers, from the consideration of superior genius, talents, taste, and refinement ; but that a people, the last of mankind in every liberal study

study which can enlarge the human mind, in every work of national honour and benefit, should have presumed to call foreigners *Niemetz* (dumb)⁸⁶, who could not comprehend their barbarous discourse, was a species of folly and madness which can only be mentioned with pity and contempt.

The dark and sanguinary soul of barbarian despotism is open to every suspicion against those who are not bound from allegiance to speak with the perfidious voice of flattery, or to conceal their superior knowledge in the arts and institutions of civil life. The face of the Russian court wore the constant features of distrust towards all strangers, and the freedom of an ambassador was frequently changed into the dependent condition of a prisoner⁸⁷. When Possevin departed from Ivan, to restrain the dangerous ambition of Stephen Battori, he left two priests charged with the affairs of his legation; they were confined to a chamber in Moscow, which exhibited an altar for their devotions, a table adapted for the purposes of writing, and benches for their repose. Three officers, and as many peasants, mounted guard at the gate, to watch over the motions

⁸⁶ Strahlenberg, p. 235.

⁸⁷ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 148, 149.

of these captives. In this state of imprisonment they passed four months and a half, during the whole of which time they but but twice enjoyed the sweetness of the open air; and even this poor indulgence was granted with reluctance, and watched by the same attendance. A catholic who exercised the profession of a physician, petitioned to see one of these priests, with a view to confession; but he was admonished not to repeat the request, if he valued his existence²².

The conduct of Alexis, who in many other respects was remarkable for a generous clemency and moderation of temper (two virtues rarely to be discovered as attendants on the throne of despotism), was swayed by the same unmanly suspicions and fears. Mayerberg, ambassador of the emperor Leopold, has described the state of Russia about the middle of the seventeenth century; though his narrative is marked by some prejudices, yet many of his observations are spirited and correct. From his brief history we learn, that the law of nations was still violated in the Russian court: it was dangerous even for the natives to gaze on the palace which contained the formidable person of Mayerberg and his

²² "Itaque nō velis interfici, cave sis, ne amplius ista proponas." Ant. Possév. Moscov. p. 38.

colleague;

colleague; and the strangers who sought them were generally dismissed by the troops who mounted guard at the gate; whilst women of every description were strictly forbidden to enter their apartments. Their unjustifiable circumspection at last rose to such a height, as prevented them exchanging a free communication with their own court: the letters which they sent, and those which they should have received, were likewise intercepted. In the course of this fettered embassy, Mayerberg lay stretched on the bed of sickness. The physicians of the court had fair pretensions to experience and practice; but the suspicious policy of Alexis made their visits so difficult⁸⁹, that the ambassador was forced to trust his returning health to the management of nature⁹⁰. The same odious language of suspicion and restraint was spoken to the ambassadors in the administration of Sophia. The Boyars, and all those who filled any civil or military employments, were still commanded to observe the same studied distance to ambassadors. The infringement of this mandate could only be effected by the secrecy of night; and perhaps,

⁸⁹ Yet Mayerberg, in his character of this prince, styles him *mansuetus et clemens*, p. 61.

⁹⁰ Mayerberg, p. 44. 47. 95.

if detected, with the forfeiture of life". The enlightened views of her brother discarded a system so evidently founded on the crumbling basis of fear and ignorance; and by his own courtesy and liberality of manners, taught his subjects to invite strangers to their tables, under the avowed principle of hospitality and friendship.

A writer, who has analysed the spirit of all laws, defines the political liberty of the subject to be a tranquillity of mind arising from the opinion each person entertains of his own safety". The large size of Moscow, and the fatal experience of a long series of nocturnal murders, shewed to the wisdom of latter princes the absolute necessity of appointing a number of noblemen" to guard over the safety, order, and peace of the licentious city. To them was entrusted the important charge of protecting the persons of the inhabitants in the different parts of the capital, and establishing safeguards against fires, robbers, and disturbances. Each of these magistrates had his fixed department, and were assisted by a certain number of inferior officers in the discharge of their duties. The policy of Alexis established guards in all the

⁹¹ See Carlisle Embassies, p. 141.

⁹² Montesquieu—*L'Esprit des Loix*, liv. xi. cap. vi.

⁹³ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 150, 151.

highways; it was their duty to arrest every passenger who pursued his way at midnight, unless attended by the light of a torch or lantern. Their vigilance ensured safety to the inhabitants of the capital, but its precincts still required to be visited by the strong arm of despotic power. The institution of a regular police is indebted for its birth to the sagacity of Peter; its present perfection²⁴ to that extraordinary woman Catharine the second, who was endowed with a genius to conceive the noblest undertakings, with wealth to execute them, and with judgment to attend to the minutest details of civil policy.

It may be reasonably doubted, whether ostentation or policy were the first inventors of that striking magnificence which from time immemorial distinguished the courts of the east. In the eyes of a philosopher, such pageantry is odious; but the statesman will descant with pleasure on the merits of a system which ever awes the turbulent spirit of the populace, and conspires to render majesty no less an object of fear than of venera-

²⁴ See a description of the police in the reign of Catharine, Tooke, vol. i. p. 440, 441. But to see the powers of Catharine's mind entirely exercised in the pursuit of real greatness, peruse her *Reglements pour l'Administration des Gouvernements de l'Empire des Russes*; à Leige, 1777.

tion :

tion: both vanity and policy may be said to have concurred in instigating the Russian monarchs to imitate, equal, and at last surpass their Asiatic masters in this particular. From the confused mass of their pompous shows, we shall select the reception of ambassadors as the most calculated to display the grandeur of the Russian state. When these representatives of independent sovereigns reached the frontiers of Russia, the Czar dispatched the Pristaff, whose various functions we have already described, to join their stately train. On their approach to the royal city, they were committed to the care of another Pristaff, of superior consequence. To this officer belonged the duty of assuming, for a time, the rank of his sovereign: he supported this high honour by a multiplicity of trifling forms, which it was almost a study to comprehend, and a certain punishment to neglect⁹⁵.

When they drew near to the end of their journey, a chosen band of Boyars, and the great officers of the state, clothed on this occasion in robes of gold and silver, and mounted upon steeds, whose housings, bridles,

⁹⁵ See in Carlisle Embassies, p. 131, 132, the ridiculous dispute between this pristaff and the ambassador, who should first come out of their sledge, and the curious manner in which it was adjusted.

and ornaments of gold and precious stones, revealed the riches of their master, came in flow and solemn procession to conduct the ambassadors to their residence. The roads and streets of the city were lined with gazing multitudes, who were taught to respect the presence of their superiors by a most rigid discipline: in this attractive spectacle, the ambassadors exposed their persons to public curiosity invested with all the ensignia of their dignities. The tediousness of their march, and the variety of the ceremonies, which were performed with the most scrupulous exactness, sometimes delayed their entrance into the capital until the close of the evening. The torches which then illuminated Moscow, served still more to display the richness of their habits in the sight of the admiring crowd.

After this brilliant appearance, their palace became their prison, and even after their first interview with the Czar, their personal freedom was still limited to the streets and environs, and to the exercise of the chace. The same prohibition to a free intercourse with natives and strangers still existed; although their public declarations professed to have abolished a law so despicable in its origin, so oppressive in its application.

The

The day of audience was announced in the evening to the ambassadors; and the same information repeated in the following morning; an escort, whose numbers were fastidiously measured to their monarch's esteem or contempt of those nations which the ambassadors represented, preceded their way to the palace. The splendid apparel of their guards was well calculated to impress the stranger with a high idea of the magnificence of the Russian sovereign: for rich sable furs adorned their persons; on their bonnets were profusely scattered the most costly gems, and their halberds glittered with gold and silver. On their arrival at the palace, an officer in the first department of the crown, accompanied by a secretary, descended to receive them at the foot of the vestibule; another slave of pomp presented himself at the stair-case, and a third was stationed at the door which opened an access to the presence. In their vain science of form and ceremony, this was termed the small, the middle, and great meeting: but this third salutation was an honour which only awaited princes whose power was very formidable.

In the first hall, which led to a long series of magnificent apartments, stood the Dvorian, who attended the Czar in his hours of state and privacy: with these appeared a number

of old men, chosen among the chief members of commerce, whose white beards and sumptuous habits gave them an aspect at once venerable and majestic. The hall of audience was covered with a carpet of inestimable value: here reigned the most profound and impressive silence. Around this hall were seated two hundred Boyars, whose dresses of velvet were almost concealed by the abundance of gold, silver, and jewels: their bonnets were formed of black fox, the most rare and valuable of all skins⁹⁶. From a throne resplendent with silver, which was raised seven or eight steps above the ground, the Czar beheld the gratifying sight of servile pomp: his robe, his tunic, and crown of pyramidical form, surmounted with a cross, dazzled the observer's eye by their precious ornaments. It was with difficulty he could hold the sceptre in his hand from its massy weight⁹⁷; near his sacred person was also placed that other ensign of royalty, the globe. According to the

⁹⁶ The skins of black foxes have obtained the price of eighty rubles. See a small pamphlet, intitled, *Some curious Observations on the Products of Russia*, by Henry Will. Ludolf, Lond. 1698; and likewise *Voyages en divers Etats*, par Pere Avril, p. 140.

⁹⁷ "Si pesant que pour se soulager, il falloit que de fois à autre il le changeât de main." *Olearius*, tom. i. liv. i. p. 43.

importance of the embassy, one or two young noblemen stood by the Czar, in buskins of snowy whiteness, in robes of ermine, or fine damask; a chain of gold hung on their necks, and a silver hatchet was carelessly thrown across their shoulders. When the patriarch assisted at this audience, his seat, covered with black velvet, was honourably raised on the right of his sovereign: on his pontifical robes were distributed a profusion of pearls and diamonds; by his side sat the metropolitan and other ecclesiastical dignitaries, whom he had named to be present at this interview. The credentials were carried in a piece of cloth, and their presents were offered, according to oriental custom, on their first introduction. The splendid scene was concluded by the ambassadors advancing to kiss the royal hand; which favour was also granted to their officers⁹⁸.

The Russian princes were now instructed to assume a more regular discipline and skill in the science of war against the foreign and

⁹⁸ For this reception and treatment of ambassadors, see Olearius, tom. i. liv. i. p. 34—54.; Ant. Poss. Moscov. 34.; Raffaele de Barberino, p. 15—20.; Lysec, p. 48—56.; Relation Curieuse de la Moscovie, p. 62, &c.; De Reb. Moschov. cap. xviii. p. 132, 133.; Carlisle's Embassies, p. 126—151—180—182.; Sir Thomas Smyth's Voyage into Russia, Lond. 1603; and Levesque, tom. iv. 154—159.

domestic

domestic enemies of their state. It may be recollected, that the establishment of the famous militia of the Strelitzes owed its institution to the genius of the Czar Ivan. Like the Prætorian bands, however, they soon became, in the idleness of the capital, more formidable to their masters than to their foes: their pay was small, but their privileges in trade compensated for it. It was the custom for the citizens to enrol themselves in this favoured body of troops. In the time of peace they had no occasion to put on arms; and they avoided the hardships of war by substituting in their places men drawn from the lowest of mankind.

In the military history of Russia, the improvements of Michael deserve notice. Under his standard appeared some German cavalry and regiments of dragoons. But the most remarkable change in the course of this century was introduced by the superior judgment of Alexis: he diminished the strength of the cavalry, and entrusted the safety of his empire chiefly to officers of German extraction. The military force then consisted of hussars, armed with lances, troopers with fusils, and dragoons with long musquets. The name of soldiers was bestowed on those troops formed by the pea-

santry and populace of the different cities : they were prepared to resist the attempts of the enemy with the fusil and the sword : they were divided into regiments, and their evolutions were chiefly practised under the guidance of foreign officers.

The troops of Kazan, Astrakan, and Siberia, were mounted on horseback, and served with the bow. The Nogais, the Baschkirs, and Calmucks, a large body of whom were always engaged in the Russian service, used the same weapon against the enemy. The fire-arms and lances of the Cossacks were admirably adapted for the nature of their service. The district of Moscow always kept forty thousand Strelitzes, without computing the supplies of other cities. A third of this fierce multitude was stationed to watch over the safety of the Czar, the rest were dispersed into different regiments. In the distribution of royal rewards, their chiefs acquired lands and annual gifts in habits and silver. The Dvoriars, or infant Boyars, had the choice of the bow, or fire-arms, in the defence of their country. The various menials of pomp in the household of the Czar were named under the different titles of *Stolniki*, or officers of the table; *Spalniki*, gentlemen of the chamber; *Stri-*

aptrchié, or domestics ; and *Dvorianes*, or nobles of Moscow ; and *Jiltsi*, or commensals. These servants of the court (for military and civil functions were united in the same persons) were distributed into companies of an hundred men, and rode on horses of great swiftness, and carried sabres of the sharpest edge⁹⁹.

In every transaction the decree of the senate, or council, was decisive : it was composed of Boyars to the amount of thirty¹⁰⁰, anciently called the *Boliari*, who maintained a pre-eminence of rank ; of *Okolnitchié*, whose title signified that they were placed immediately about the person of their prince ; of *Doumnié Dvoriané*, or the nobles of the council ; and of *Doumnié Diaki*, or secretaries of the council. The titles of many other officers it would be useless to enumerate.

In an absolute monarchy, like that of Russia, the forms of civil and military administration could not embrace any complicated system of policy, as the whole duty of a subject was a passive obedience to the will of his sovereign. The whole correspondence between the prince and his subjects was managed by that national tribunal, called the

⁹⁹ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 164, 165, 166. ; Mayerberg, p. 91—93. ; Strahlenberg, p. 220.

¹⁰⁰ Carlisle Embassies, p. 66.

council ; and this institution, the only public organ of the people, may be said to have been entirely filled with the satellites of the prince, whose power could humble them to the dust, and whose smile exalt them to instantaneous greatness. Yet the formule of every decree which issued from this tribunal of nobles, *Boiars prigovõrili i Tzar prikazal*, "The Boyars have advised, and the Czar executed," would seem to insinuate, that their influence restricted while it supported the authority of the monarch.

But this was not the only public act in which the despots of Russia affected to disguise their irresistible power, and ostensibly confessed themselves the accountable ministers of a people, whose lives they so often sacrificed to the faintest whispers of suspicion and caprice. When the Czar had determined to unsheathe the sword of foreign war, he condescended to appear in the principal church of his capital, to hear a secretary of state¹⁰¹ assign the reasons to the credulous multitude which urged him to the unavoidable necessity of a just revenge. Yet how quickly would this flimsy artifice have been exposed, if any of these titled slaves had expressed the slightest murmur of discontent to these formal

¹⁰¹ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 167—169.

declarations: to what a destructive extent the hurricane of despotism would then have raged! neither hope, fear, innocence, nor supplication could then have been cheered by the momentary sunshine of peace and safety, until perhaps the rash though honest offence was wiped away in the blood of the whole senatorial order.

REVOLUTION THE EIGHTH.

The Accession of Peter the Great.

OUR eyes are now turned towards that great revolution which has impressed a new and lasting character on the immense nation of Russia; the reader will anticipate the name of the first Peter as the author of this memorable and happy change. The reputation of the conqueror, whose chief pride is to be the thunderbolt of war, lives only in the interested applause and admiration of his own age: but the memory of the father of his country is immortal; the apparel of the one is the more splendid, and therefore more striking to the sight of common observers. The martial achievements of Peter have been celebrated by such a variety of historical pens, that they may be almost paralleled in notoriety, to those accomplished by the daring genius and wild ambition of Julius Cæsar. It may be deemed then no arduous task, to submit to the approbation of the public a volume of sterile abundance, composed from such well-known materials; we shall therefore present the hero with his sceptre of dominion,

minion, slightly touch on the military and naval events of his reign, and contemplate him chiefly in the shades of his private life, and in his more amiable character of reformer of his country, which glorious title he so justly claims from his works, his genius, and his judgment.

WHEN Fedor the son of Alexis died, 1682. and left no offspring as the faithful pattern of his clemency, moderation, and temperance, Ivan and Peter, his two brothers, might justly be considered the two most natural candidates to the vacant throne. An historian, whose pen is moved with singular quickness and elegance, but whose fancy and prejudice too often lead him beyond the bounds of probability and reason, has declared that his youngest brother was nominated his successor by the dying Czar¹; but a more intimate

¹ "Feodór, avant d'expirer voyant que son frère Ivan, trop disgracié de la nature, étoit incapable de régner, nomma pour héritier des Russies son second frère Pierre, &c." Voltaire Hist. de Russie, p. 98.—We are surprised to see Mr. Tooke fall into the same error, vol. ii. p. 41. Le Clerc also, whose disposition to contradict Levesque, and reverence for Voltaire, have led him into some awkward situations in his History of Peter, embraces the same opinion, vol. iii. p. 105. But the superior research of Levesque has exposed and rectified their mistakes, in a valuable note of his fourth volume, p. 204. And Mr. Coxe evinces his accustomed sagacity

intimate acquaintance with the political maxims of Russia would have corrected this assertion, and informed him, that in latter reigns, the rights of primogeniture were invariably respected, and consequently that Fedor expired in the full confidence of Ivan's claims being ratified by the united consent of the nobles and people.

¹ Ivan had attained his sixteenth year when the throne became vacant; but a sickly constitution blasted both the vigor of his mind and body. His brother Peter, who drew his birth from Natalia, the second wife of Alexis, was then a stranger, by his early years, to the cares attendant upon dominion.

² The constant illness of the elder prince urged the Boyars to exalt Peter to the throne of his ancestors, whose boldness of mien, and vivacity of manners had long attracted their fondest attention. Ivan submitted, without reluctance, to this singular and unexpected

sagacity and intelligence, when he says, it is not probable that Fedor, who was entirely governed by Sophia, and his own family, should act in direct opposition to their interests, and insure, by the nomination of Peter, the administration of affairs, to the Narishkins (his relatives and partizans); vol. ii. p. 24.

² Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 106.

³ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 206—209, 210.

resolution of the Boyars. But his eldest sister Sophia, who was esteemed the most lovely as well as the most accomplished of her sex*, enraged and disappointed at this election of her step-brother Peter, and supported by a powerful faction, infused the spirit of commotion among the Strelitzes, which soon restored the injured Ivan to his prerogatives of birth.

If it be so difficult a task to discover the steady countenance of truth, in our times, amidst the mercenary roar of faction, vain is the endeavour to discover her at the distance of a hundred and twenty years. Some writers, who excel in defamation†, have openly

* Her intellectual attainments are noticed with great spirit by Coxe, vol. ii. p. 48. ; while the charms of her person are attested by all her friends and foes, except by the stupid, factious, and dishonourable Adrien Baillet, the supposititious envoy of Poland, who describes her as a lump of deformity. See his effete and party-stained work, *La Relation de la Moscovie ; à la Haye, 1699 ; p. 151.*

† Voltaire has given the *ton* to most of the French writers to defame the character of Sophia. One of his most faithful copyists, Lacombe, thus paints the princess in such sanguinary colours, that we might almost suppose, from his portrait, she inherited the soul of a Tiberius or Caligula : “ Cette femme embrase la capitale des feux de la sédition, elle même se met à la tête des revoltés, elle ranime leur fureur languissante, sa rage est insatiable ; et trois jours de carnage et d’abomination ne peuvent satisfaire cette implacable furie ;” p. 112, 113.

asserted,

asserted, that this princess wanted power rather than inclination to effectuate the death of Peter. Others, willing to absolve her of all ambition, have not scrupled to insinuate her perfect innocence in the riots of the Strelitzes. So glaring on either side are the colours of falsehood in the picture of party. In total despair, therefore, of giving a political character of Sophia which the justice of history might sanction, we shall proceed to shew in what a quick manner the popular enthusiasm determined the crown in favour of Ivan.

Some emissaries of Sophia posted to the different quarters of this formidable militia, and there circulated the report, that Ivan had been strangled by the Narishkins, the relations and adherents of Peter⁶. Illustrious sufferers generally experience sympathy, if not redress, from the people. On the sound of the trumpet of faction, twenty thousand men soon appeared in arms at Moscow⁷, and stood before the Kremlin with artillery. "Deliver, quickly deliver to our revenge these traitors, these murderers of the Czar," was the general shout of this furious band.

Their strength, their rage, commanded the instant attendance of the terrified court. Ivan,

⁶ Strahlenberg, p. 227, 228.

⁷ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 108.

Peter,

Peter, his mother, and ministers, came out of the palace to pacify their tumultuous passions. Formed into one body, and moved by one soul, they insolently exclaimed, "We will no longer delay our election of a sovereign." Then saluting Ivan⁸ with their lances as their Czar, they rushed into the palace with savage looks and desperate intentions. Their first victim was Aphanasi Narishkin, brother of Natalia. Terror, or accident had directed his steps to the chapel. They threw him out of the window, and their cruel comrades received his body on the points of their lances⁹. Some Boyars, chief officers of the crown, members of the council, a long train of their dependants, and the physicians, suffered immediate death, under the vague suspicion of having destroyed the beloved Fedor, by the secret operations of poison¹⁰.

⁸ If we may believe the Jesuit missionary Bouvet, in his *Present Condition of the Moscovite Empire*, Lond. 1699, p. 9. Peter would have been driven from the throne by the seditious Strelitzes, if he had not displayed a heart incapable of fear, when so many of his friends and relations were murdered in his presence.

⁹ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 109.

¹⁰ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 211.; and Consett's *State of Russia*, 1729, p. 27.

"The reins of government were then put by them into the hands of Sophia; while the name of Czar, and the name only, was enjoyed by the dull Ivan, which was likewise bestowed on Peter at the urgent intreaties of his brother". By the orders of this united band, the patriarch put the crown on their youthful heads; but the whole legislative as well as executive power was exercised without disguise, and without control, by Sophia". More anxious now than ever to ingratiate herself into the favour and esteem of troops, from whose minds could not be concealed the dreadful secret of their own irresistible weight, she appointed Ivan Khovanfski their commander, who had the valuable talent of rendering himself both an object of their love and fear: yet to such a pitch of unmanageable insolence had these Janissaries of Russia arisen, from their late guilty victory, that the government was not only obliged to confiscate the goods of the murdered Boyars, to purchase their precarious faith, but also

¹¹ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 111. Mottley's Life of Peter the Great, Lond. 1739, vol. i. p. 15.; and *Memoirs du Regne de Pierre le Grand*, tom. ii. p. 8.

¹² Tooke, vol. ii. p. 45.

¹³ She so far assumed the attributes of royalty, as to have her image impressed upon the current coin. See Strahlenberg, p. 229. Lacombe, p. 117, 118.

to distribute a most liberal donative to them¹⁴.

The regent, and her prime minister Golitzin¹⁵, (whose liberality to strangers, free, and affable manners, quick capacity for business, and familiar knowledge of the Latin language, has obtained a most distinguished fame in the history of his own times,) had now full opportunity to concert measures for the solid establishment of their power. The Czar Ivan slumbered on the throne. His brother was carefully excluded from all affairs of the state by the princess and her sagacious colleague, and permitted to consume his time in the company of foreigners, who plunged him into a dissolute course of amusements, studied to render him indifferent to public esteem¹⁶, and soon removed him from the management of a weak and timid mother; yet in this association he felt the first vital spark of his future greatness.

These companions of his looser hours placed before his admiring view the outlines of the arts, government, and military disci-

¹⁴ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 112.

¹⁵ See his intellectual accomplishments in Mottley, vol. i. p. 20.; Banks's History of Peter the Great, Lond. 1740, p. 51.; Lacombe, p. 118.

¹⁶ Strahlenberg, 238, 239.; Vita de Pietro il Grande, Ven. 1739, p. 41—47.; Considerations sur les Causes de la Foiblesse et de la Puissance de l'Empire de Russie, Amst. 1772, cap. xxi. p. 92, 93.

pline of polished nations. Thus, while Sophia and her confederates imagined the neglected prince ¹⁷ was rapidly approaching to the summit of infamy and vice, and the ambition of their patroness had embraced the throne by his condemnation to a monastery, the genius and judgment of Peter were laying the foundations of that monument which was hereafter to record his name as the benefactor of his country.

The increasing sickness of Ivan justified one part of the sanguine hopes of Sophia. To fix them beyond the reach of accident, she immediately determined to bind her brother in matrimonial vows, whose bed, if fruitful or barren, would equally tend to the continuance of her authority. From the powerless infancy of a child ¹⁸ she had a long period to reign before any check could be given to her ambition. If barren, her in-

¹⁷ Alex's had however appointed General Menefius, a Scotchman, for his preceptor, who was, to quote the words of Mottley, "a person well qualified for that employment," being thoroughly acquainted with all the affairs of Europe, and speaking perfectly well all the European languages; "but the commotions raised by Sophia," continues the same author, "who not being able to make Menefius abandon the interest of this her half-brother, forced him to retire;" vol. i. p. 11.

¹⁸ See the curious and criminal advice of Golitzin in this affair. *Vita di Pietro il Grande*, p. 51, 52.

trigues,

trigues, supported by her present authority, would be able, in the end, to banish from the throne the supposed degenerate son of Natalia. A beautiful young lady named Praskovia, was destined to promote the former part of this ambitious project¹⁹. Her marriage with the infirm Ivan was solemnized 1684. at the commencement of the year. But another and more threatening insurrection of the Strelitzian bands had nearly put an end to the regent's power in the same manner as she received it.

Their beloved chief Khovanski owed his 1685. exalted station to Sophia²⁰; but, elated by his success, and fierce from the attachment of this licentious soldiery, he ceased to remember the ruling hand which had raised him to his present honours. Majesty could not brook an insult which so sensibly wounded its pride, and endangered its safety. The court then held its residence at Colomna. A placard was affixed to the gates of the palace, which announced the intention of Khovanski, his son, and the Strelitzes, to involve the Czars, their family, the patriarch, and Boyars, in one horrible massacre. The

¹⁹ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 114.; Lacombe, p. 120, 121.; Banks, p. 48.

²⁰ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 217, 218. Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 114, 115.

court immediately retired to the strong monastery of the Holy Trinity, whose massy walls, large moats, and ramparts furnished with artillery, were then their surest safeguard.

The most strenuous exertions were made by the administration to crush the first movements of sedition ; but the public tranquillity chiefly required the presence of Khovanski at this asylum of royalty ; and the boldness of Sophia dispatched the summons. After some hesitation, this officer obeyed the mandate, either from a just confidence in his strength, or his own innocence. But before he set out on this doubtful journey he was taken. His son, a youth of daring enterprize, was also seized in a neighbouring village of the capital.

²¹ On the first intelligence of the capture of the Khovanskis, the enraged Strelitzes sounded the alarum bell, provided themselves with arms from the arsenal, posted picquets in all the quarters of the city, and prepared to march towards the Holy Trinity, with a full determination of shedding the noblest blood of the empire. An ²² officer, in his pressing anxiety to deliver a letter of the

²¹ Mottley, vol. i. p. 18. ; *Memoirs du Regne de Pierre le Grand*, tom. ii. p. 16, 17.

²² Levesque, tom. iv. p. 219, 220.

Czar to the patriarch, had nearly perished by the popular fury. This despotic body of guards commanded the patriarch to give them the contents of the royal epistle. When the trembling prelate informed them of the execution of their favourite and his son, their passions returned again with redoubled violence, their eyes glared with fury, and their swords menaced destruction. With one voice, and with one spirit, they cried, "Let us march, let us give the stroke of death to all the Boyars."

But when these sanguinary troops discovered that their numbers no longer awed and terrified the court, who had assembled a strong force to oppose them, and was sending out for the arrest of the most treasonable of the cohort, their courage gave way to the most violent despair. The streets of Moscow now only resounded with the exclamations of their penitence and guilt; and with an unfeigned sorrow, the effect of their just terrors, they proceeded to the forms of their own condemnation. They first approached the altar, and received with tears of contrition the sacraments of the church. When this sacred duty was performed, they took a last farewell of their wives and children", and proceeded towards the Holy Tri-

" Banks, p. 47.; Lacômbé, p. 115.

nity; while such was their surprising and profound repentance, that they even carried the hatchets, cords, and other implements of their punishment, and saved the court the trouble of enforcing the just severity of the law, by pronouncing their own sentence of death. The most obnoxious suffered, the rest were indebted for their lives to the zealous intercession of the patriarch²⁴. But this band, once so formidable and favoured, for ever lost the confidence of Sophia, and was divided among the regiments on the frontiers²⁵, until their numbers became contemptible.

On this settlement of a rebellion, the success of which must have inevitably left behind it a long train of disorder and ruin, the empire soon recovered its health and vigour, under the wise counsels of the princess and her able adviser Golitzin: but in her entire attention to the flourishing state of the empire, she forgot to consider that her usurpation had placed her on a slippery piece of ice where it was difficult to stand without the greatest caution and firmness, and impossible to fall without immediate ruin. The age of infancy now no more exercised its thoughtless sway over Peter; his mind glowed with

²⁴ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 116.

²⁵ Tooke, vol. ii. p. 48.

the fire of ambition, and a thirst of knowledge, which opened to him all the duties and temptations of absolute power; while his proud heart could ill stoop to play the obsequious character of the slave, where he felt both his rights and personal merit entitled him to represent the master.

An event soon occurred, the consequences of which ought to have proved a sure preface to Sophia, that one of them only could reign, and that all hopes of conciliation were at an end. In the middle of this year, the war which had been commenced between Russia and Poland in the reign of Alexis, was terminated in advantageous conditions to the former by the wisdom and address of Golitzin. The Ottoman court at that time had quarrelled with the Poles and Germans²⁶. Both these powers warmly solicited Russia to throw her sword into the common scale, in order to employ the Turks on the side of the Crimean Tatars. 1686.

Sophia at first refused to listen to the alliance. But some Boyars, the strenuous partizans of Peter, framed their opinion with such art and flattery, as to persuade the princeps to join the proposed confederacy, and her favourite to take the chief command.

²⁶ Tooke, vol. ii. p. 48, 49, 59.

Trained up from infancy to the arts of courts, and to the management of civil business, the military talents of Golitzin were justly deemed by the sagacious adherents of Peter inadequate to that important charge²⁷; the least miscarriage would therefore not only injure his own reputation, but make the people highly dissatisfied with the regent; while the absence of Golitzin would enable Peter to infuse with greater ease and quickness the poison of discontent among all ranks. The unsuccessful event of the war justified the most sanguine expectations of Peter and those of his faction.

1687. In one campaign, such was the revenge of party, or the caprice of fortune, or the ignorance of his manœuvres, that the strength of forty thousand men was rendered useless for ever by the irresistible swords of the enemy. Golitzin's army amounted to three hundred thousand men, yet disgrace still followed this immense force in every engagement; and their general retreated into Russia without once obtaining the name of a conqueror. Sophia laboured to conceal the misfortune of her minister, by throwing all the failure of this defeat upon the Hetman of the Cossacks²⁸, and banishing him into Siberia for his ill conduct; but

²⁷ Mottley, vol. i. p. 22.

²⁸ See Gordon's History of Peter the Great, vol. i. p. 87.
the

the culpable object was visible even to the dull sight of the people: a partial murmur of dissatisfaction was heard throughout the capital, which the ill success of the second campaign swelled into a cry of general indignation.

At the age of nineteen²⁹, the royal Peter displayed the first dawns of that fiery openness of temper, and undaunted firmness of mind, which so plainly characterised his maturer years. Conscious of his ability to administer the public affairs for the benefit of the people, he scorned to disguise the rancour of heart which he entertained towards his sister for the violent methods which she had taken to wrest them from his hands. Their dislike increased by years, and, fomented by the arts of faction, at last reached to such an implacable aversion for each other, as manifested itself almost on every public occasion. 1689.

³⁰ But the time now approached when Sophia could no longer oppose Peter's right to exercise the power of a sovereign. The sovereigns of Russia, according to an ancient custom, assisted at certain festivals of the Greek calendar in their most splendid habits of ceremony. To one of these exhibitions of religious pride Sophia repaired,

²⁹ Confett, p. 31.

³⁰ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 228, 229, 230.

with a diadem on her head, and all the other emblems of supreme authority. Peter appeared next in the solemn procession; but, unable to stifle his transports of indignation at the superior majesty assumed by his sister, he abruptly retired from the church and the city to Kolomna, followed by his friends who eagerly sought every opportunity to exasperate the resentment of their prince.

Soon after his departure, the alarming intelligence was brought to him at Preobrajensko, that the Strelitzes of several regiments had assembled in the Kremlin, and that Stcheglovitoi, the successor of the unfortunate Khovanski, and the devoted slave of Sophia, headed this formidable body of men, whose motions were therefore doubtless directed by Sophia and her ministers.

Peter retired with his mother to the fortified monastery of the Holy Trinity, and immediately summoned to their aid the troops of the cities. The regiment of Strelitzes commanded by Soukharef, hastened to dispute with them the honour of protecting Peter's person from the dangers of secret or avowed conspiracy. Stcheglovitoi, unac-

³¹ Gordon, vol. i. p. 89. Mottley, vol. i. p. 37. Lacombe, p. 128.

quainted with the failure of his design, pressed forwards on a rapid march to Preobrajensko. The absence of the court at once revealed to him the discovery of his secret; but sensible that dissimulation, not force, could only prevent the fatal consequences of his treachery, he attempted to hide the real cause of this visit, under his duty to relieve the guard of the prince³²; a tale so little varnished over with truth, as to be rejected even by the credulity of the multitude, who well knew that these favourite troops were never accustomed to attend their sovereign but in his capital.

Every action of Sophia, when she discovered neither threats nor arms could subdue Peter, strongly betrayed her trembling perplexity and inward guilt. She surpassed the people, if possible, in her expressions of abhorrence against this atrocious plot of the Strelitzes. The consciousness of public suspicion urged her to implore the patriarch³³ to mollify the rage and to solicit the love of her brother. The unavailing attempt was made by the real or affected zeal of the chief of the church. But on his arrival at the Holy Trinity, he resigned for ever the wish of acting the part of mediator, on seeing a full expo-

³² *Memoires du Regne de Pierre le Grand*, tom. ii. p. 77.; *Vita de Pietro il Grande*, p. 59.

³³ *Lacombe*, p. 131.; *Vita di Pietro il Grande*, p. 63.

sition of those circumstances which established the guilt of Stcheglovitoi, and which also lead to a strong presumption, that the princess was the secret promoter of this disturbance.

The discovery of her violent proceedings not only induced the patriarch to forget his professions of support in her cause, but provoked him to treat her with the most contemptuous silence. He neither returned to Moscow, or deigned to acquaint her distracted mind with the result of his mission. Overwhelmed with dismay and terror, she set out for the Trinity to vindicate her conduct. But, in the progress of her journey, she received a mandate from Peter for her return to Moscow²⁴, delivered in such terms, as plainly signified that she had nothing to expect from his love, every thing to dread from his hatred. Hopeless of effecting an accommodation with her brother, and warned of her impending danger by this order, she endeavoured to escape into Poland; but this last prospect of freedom was closed by the active hand of party-zeal. Arrested, and conducted to the Devitchèe nunnery, her dreams of ambition gradually dissolved in the solitude of this perpetual confinement²⁵. Thus fell, from

²⁴ Mottley, vol. i. p. 40.; Banks, p. 57.

²⁵ Cox, vol. ii. p. 41.

the height of power, a woman whose actions, though deeply blackened by prejudice, yet leave as little doubt that her crimes were ambiguous, as that her courage and prudence, had she proved consistent in her conduct, would have annihilated for ever the future glories of Peter³⁶.

The fate of Golitzin was no less severe and expeditious. Born with too noble a spirit to desert his benefactress in the hour of danger, he sought by every attention to dispel her apprehensions in their way to the Holy Trinity: but he was arrested, and his life reluctantly spared at the intercession of his cousin Boris Golitzin, the governor of Peter. Stripped of his rank and employments, a tattered garment was the sole remnant of his fortunes, who had so lately administered the affairs of a great empire. Golitzin was first banished with his family to Kargapol: his second place of exile was Poustozerkoi, where

³⁶ In the "*Antidote ou Examen du voyage en Siberie, de l'Abbe d'Auteroche*," the great part of which work is attributed to the pen of the second Catharine, a friendly eye has been cast over the faults of Sophia, while her foresight, activity, and vigour in the affairs of government, are celebrated with a commendable and disinterested zeal. We read in Tooke, vol. ii. p. 41. and in some other respectable authorities that Peter frequently expressed his regret, that the boundless ambition of Sophia hindered him from sharing half his throne with her. But the character of the speaker very much invalidates the sincerity of the sentiment.

he

he ended his days, long remembered for his numerous virtues ³⁷. By the orders of Peter, Stcheglovitoi and his accomplices departed from Moscow to the Trinity. Their crimes were too manifest and heinous for Peter to think of forgiveness. The chiefs of this conspiracy were beheaded; while their subordinate associates, after their tongues were cut out, received the milder sentence of banishment to Siberia ³⁸.

The desire of suppressing the faintest spark of insurrection, now recalled Peter to the capital. His brother not only appeared to manifest a violence of rage against the conduct of his sister, little to be expected from his feeble disposition, but atoned for her guilt by the full surrender of his superior claims to the crown. In the government of this mighty state, Peter now stood alone and absolute, yet he invariably affected to consult his brother in all transactions of importance, a consolation perfectly sufficient to a character so indolent and unambitious. The debilitated con-

³⁷ Mottley, vol. i. p. 44.; Lacombe, p. 132.; Vita di Pietro il Grande, p. 65.; Gordon, vol. i. p. 91.; Banks, p. 57.; Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 120. Mr. Coxe however contradicts this assertion, and says in a note, vol. ii. p. 41. that this able minister survived his fall twenty-four years; he was released from his prison in 1711, and died at his own estate in 1713.

³⁸ Williams's Russia, p. 93.

stitution of this prince brought him to the grave about seven years subsequent to his resignation³⁹; and over his tomb might be inscribed this dubious praise, that he performed no action which contributed either to the glory or happiness, or misery of the people.

IN our attention to those events which heaped on the minority of Peter all the troubles of domestic discord, we have neglected to observe his youthful sports, which may be said to have taught him the virtues of firmness and patience, and those studies which enlarged his growing powers, and first impressed on his mind the desire of fame, and the love of knowledge.

The⁴⁰ court of Peter, when Russia obeyed the commands of Sophia, was generally held at Preobrajensko, a neighbouring town of the capital, situate on the pleasant borders of the Yausa. At this place he kept fifty young men, the sons of the chief Boyars, in the double capacity of officers of his household and companions of his pleasures. Among the strangers who had repaired thither, and

³⁹ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 234.

⁴⁰ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 126, 127. Levesque, tom. iv. p. 235, 236.

whose

whose seasonable counsels had equally engaged the affection of Peter, and acquired a happy ascendancy over his impetuous disposition, was a Genoese named Le Fort, a man educated in the rough school of adversity, possessing a strong understanding, improved by the study and experience of mankind, and who was also gifted with the great art of conveying the harshest truth to the ear of the Czar, without offending his pride, or forfeiting his attachment.

This " steady adherent of Peter, sprung from a noble family at Geneva, was designed for commerce, but soon left it for the profession of arms, which he had followed in Holland, and in the citadel of Marseilles with approved courage. His adventurous spirit, which had induced him to visit Russia under the reign of Alexis, in the expectation of making a still more distinguished figure, found little difficulty in converting Peter to the love of a science so admirably calculated to display his courage, and so appropriate to the versatility of his genius. By the advice, and under the direction of this handsome soldier of fortune⁴¹, these youthful associates of Peter were

⁴¹ For the History of Le Fort, see Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 126, 127.

⁴² The personal attractions of Le Fort are reported to have been so striking, that soon after his arrival in Russia, they

were soon clothed in the less cumbrous habit of the Germans, instructed to move to the sound of martial music, and gradually familiarized with the rudiments of war.

The young Czar, to encourage the vigour of discipline by his presence and example, condescended to promote the military art in the humble rank of a drummer⁴³. This voluntary choice of the lowest situation was wisely made to stifle every murmur of discontent which might issue from his less war-like companions against the hardships and restraints which this new study imposed; for it may be presumed that none could complain with justice of the rigour of a state which was more than equally shared by their indefatigable sovereign. The good conduct of the illustrious drummer was soon rewarded with the name of private soldier, and afterwards, by his conspicuous obedience to the orders of his superiors, he was successively appointed

they procured him the affection and hand of a young lady of high rank and large fortune. See a note of Tooke, vol. ii. p. 52.

⁴³ Mottley, vol. i. p. 55. *Œuvres de Fontenelle*, 1785. *Eloge du Czar Pierre*, tom. iii. p. 191. Lacombe, p. 135, 136. *Memoirs pour servir à l'Histoire de l'Empire Rusien*, sous Pierre le Grand, par un ministre étranger, résident en cette Cour. La Haye, 1725. p. 52. *Vita di Pietro il Grande*, p. 69.

to

to the stations of the sergeant and lieutenant of his company. The voice of flattery so loudly blew her trumpet for this military association⁴⁴, the abilities of Peter, and the affability of his manners (which his critical situation so indispensably required), that each day fresh streams of recruits poured into the royal village. Their numbers at last became so great that they swelled into two regiments, the former which was called Preobrajenski⁴⁵, and the latter took the appellation of Semenovski. They frequently performed their military exercises before Sophia and the Strelitzes; while the former, in her smiles of encouragement, little thought that this association would shorten her power; and the latter, that their precarious attachment would be supplied, and dangerous strength reduced, by these new-raised bands:

In these useful amusements which initiated the Russian youth into the science of tactics, and consequently taught them to acknowledge the advantages of regular discipline, the hours of the prince were consumed, until ac-

⁴⁴ Voltaire, *Hist. de Russie*, p. 122. informs us that a fort was constructed by the martial zeal of Peter, in the attack and defence of which there was as much effusion of blood as in a field of battle. "On donna un combat réel, dans le quel il y eut des soldats de tués et beaucoup de blessés."

⁴⁵ *Le Clerc*, tom. iii. p. 128. *Chantreau*, vol. i. p. 161.

cident led him to the study of navigation. In an ⁴⁶ excursion to Ismaelof with Timmerman his master of fortification, his inquisitive turn of mind brought him to visit a magazine, where he discovered among a heap of neglected things, an old English boat. Struck with the peculiarity of its shape, he eagerly inquired why it was constructed in a manner dissimilar to all those which had hitherto met his sight. Timmerman informed him, that it was a vessel so constructed as to sail against the wind. 1692.

All the enthusiasm of curiosity now fluttered in the heart of Peter. In the impatience of his wishes to behold this manœuvre, whose utility was so apparent, the hours rolled heavily along until Timmerman recollected that a man had quitted Holland in the reign of his father Alexis, for the express purpose of building some ships on the Caspian sea.

Carstens Brandt, for such was the name of the once forgotten but now important shipwright, was quickly found, and as quickly released from his trade of a joiner ⁴⁷, which his poverty had imposed upon him, and reinstated in his former profession, which he had only abandoned from necessity, and to which

⁴⁶ Confett, p. 209, 210, 211.

⁴⁷ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 138.

he returned with joy. His skill and diligence, called into action by the prospect of reward and applause, soon repaired the vessel, provided it with a mast and rigging, and sailed in it upon the Yausa to the astonishment of the young Czar, and doubtless to his no less astonished court.

From the frequent indulgence of this favorite amusement, the sovereign of Russia soon acquired sufficient skill to undertake the management of the boat. But from sailing along the placid bosom of rivers and lakes in the vicinity of Moscow, he made, before a year had ripened his naval judgment, the voyage of Archangel, on the White Sea, with a convoy of Dutch and English ships⁴⁸.

This new passion of the Czar appears the more extraordinary, when we read in the history of these times, that at the age of fourteen, he could not pass over a river or bridge without displaying the strongest symptoms of fear⁴⁹. His relations might now have felt as much uneasiness at his bold operations on the sea, as they were before alarmed, lest the excessive timidity of the boy should tinge the whole spirit of the man.

⁴⁸ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 239.

⁴⁹ Strahlenberg, p. 273. relates the cause of his terror and the manner of his cure.

It would lessen the dignity of history to notice these pursuits, if they could be at all compared to those which are so hastily adopted and as hastily discarded by the ardour and fickleness of youthful minds. But from these juvenile amusements of Peter may be dated the origin of that mighty revolution in the navy, commerce, and army of his vast disjointed empire. For his mind⁵⁰, which was capable of framing the most bold and original schemes of policy, being incessantly bent on these several objects, insensibly began to enlarge the sphere of his contemplation, and to feel all the great advantages which would accrue to his country, and to his political consequence in the eyes of Europe, by placing these pillars of the state on a more extensive and solid foundation.

⁵⁰ With a mixture of astonishment and incredulity, we read in Mr. Tooke's History of Russia, vol. ii. p. 162. that Peter *on his return from his travels* ordered the tempestuous Ladoga to receive the knout for spoiling his exhibition of aquatic skill, and terrifying his mind. Although no authority is cited for this singular act, and in the extent of our researches it has never before met our eye, the high and deserved reputation of the author for accuracy of information prevents us from disputing its authenticity; otherwise we never could have supposed that the immortal legislator of Russia, whose actions proved him so little subject to the dominion of fear, and whose natural genius was so much improved by his wide survey of mankind, could have acted a part so injurious to the interests of his people and so disgraceful to himself.

In the autumn of his years, the cooler judgment of Peter would have preferred the serene days of peace ; but he now languished to obtain the applause of the multitude, in the field of uncertain war. The ⁵¹ Poles and the Turks were still armed for defence or conquest ; and Peter resolved to try his strength in their long and desultory contest. He perceived that the most effectual way to humble the insolence of the Turk, was to gain possession of the strong town of Azof, which commands the mouth of the Don ; while he sought an ultimate reward for his labours in the empire of the Euxine sea ⁵². A fleet was constructed at Veronetz, to aid his ambitious designs. But his impatience to attack the enemy, without the conjunction of his ships ⁵³, destroyed the laurel of victory which might otherwise have adorned his first campaign.

1695. The ⁵⁴ future hero of Russia divided his force into two armies. One, composed of an hundred thousand men, marched under Cheremetef. This corps, not confining itself to its intention of keeping the Tatars in check, reduced several towns : the other, destined to

⁵¹ Tooke, vol. ii. p. 62.

⁵² See the Hist. of the Czar Peter by a British officer in the service of the Czar. Lond. 1723. p. 14.

⁵³ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 136.

⁵⁴ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 245, 246.

form the important siege of Azof, was conducted by Chein, and animated in the pursuit of glory by the presence of the sovereign. Their first attempts were successful. "Two forts called Cauanpaes, opposite to each other, the Don pursuing his course between them, first presumed to resist the arms of the Czar, but were soon punished for their audacity by the skill and resolution of the Russians. But the citadel of Azof, supported by the courage and constancy of six thousand men, and provided against the danger of famine by the unremitting care of the Tatars, to whom the sea gave an unmolested communication on one side of the town, might well deride the menace of a siege. After a loss of thirty thousand men, the disappointed Czar was at last compelled to acknowledge with a sigh that the walls of Azof were for the present impregnable. Three thousand men were left, however, in the two forts which their valour had gained, to keep Azof in a state of blockade during the winter.

But perhaps this wound to the Russian arms was more inflicted by the treachery of an individual, than by the want of a suitable appearance of transports to prevent the succours of the Tatars. Chein, for some

⁵⁵ Gordon, vol. i. p. 99.

trivial offence, unfortunately disgraced the person of Jacob, an engineer of most approved skill, with the punishment of the knout⁵⁶. He resented this fatal indignity, first by spiking the cannon⁵⁷ of the Czar, and then throwing himself into the besieged town of Azof, whose efforts he redoubled by a skill and diligence quickened by the hopes of a sure revenge. The undismayed and active mind of Peter was stimulated more than ever by the failure of his late designs. And it is only in trying situations like these that we can accurately discern the immense distance between the man of real and artificial courage; the former prevents his ruin by his resolution to fall, while the latter meanly sinks without the faintest struggle. Nothing was wanting on the part of Peter to ensure success, when he led his troops a second time against the authors of their shame.

1696. Chein received the command of the land forces⁵⁸; the friendly disposition of the emperor, the republic of Holland, and the elector of Brandenburg, almost sent forth a colony of engineers, gunners, and miners, to second

⁵⁶ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 137.

⁵⁷ Voltaire *Hist. de Russie*, p. 130. Banks, p. 72. Vita di Pietro il Grande, p. 75. Mottley, vol. i. p. 71. Lacombe, p. 142.

⁵⁸ Tooke, vol. ii. p. 63.

their

their efforts³⁹; whilst two men of war, twenty-three or thirty galleies⁴⁰, two galleots, and four fire-ships, swept the seas, to the astonishment and dismay of the Turks, under the orders of the brave Le Fort. The fortress of Azof so lately triumphant and strong, was now to be oppressed by the well-concerted plans of the Russians. The military engines of the Turks were rendered useless, their attacks repulsed, and their hopes of subsistence intercepted by the union, the valour, and the circumspection of the enemy. While their despair was aggravated by the reflection, that they must either suffer the extremity of hunger, or else be reduced to the humiliating necessity of a capitulation. They at last preferred the less heroic but more safe condition. On the twenty-eighth of July⁴¹, a day of exultation to the Russians, the Czar, who might secretly wish to avoid the despair of an armed foe, permitted the garrison and inhabitants of Azof to collect their most precious valuables, and

³⁹ Gordon, vol. i. p. 104, 105. Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 138.

⁴⁰ Coxe, vol. ii. p. 176. Lacombe, p. 146.—Observe the rapid increase of the Russian navy in 1699 and 1702, in the *Diarium Itineris in Moscoviam* of Korb, secretary of the Austrian Embassy to Russia in the year 1697, p. 236.; in Le Brun, vol. i. p. 64.; and admire the prodigious exertions of the Czar and his people.

⁴¹ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 139.

to depart with all which they could carry⁶². But the Turks nor their prophet could rescue from destruction their convert Jacob, whose desertion had proved so instrumental to their first success. By an express⁶³ article of the treaty, he was delivered into the hands of the Russians. The love of fame was the ardent passion of the Czar : but his immediate orders to guard his conquest by new and more powerful fortifications⁶⁴, and to form a harbour where vessels of the largest magnitude might ride with safety, is a proof that his enterprising spirit was equalled by his prudence.

The laudable pride of the Czar now determined that the voice of public gratitude should recompense the services of his warriors, and inflame them to new deeds which might cause the name of Russia to be echoed through Europe in the grateful sounds of fear and respect. To render this victory⁶⁵, therefore, peculiarly impressive to the memory of his countrymen, he commanded

⁶² Levesque, tom. iv. p. 247.

⁶³ Gordon, vol. i. p. 109.

⁶⁴ Williams's Russia. See Bouvet for a full account of his improvements at Azof, p. 26, &c.

⁶⁵ "On frappa," says Clerc, "une medaille dont la legende est remarquable ; *Pierre I. Empereur de Moscovie ; toujours Auguste*. Sur la reverſe est la ville d'Azof, avec ces mots ; *Vainqueur par les flammes et les eaux*." Tom. iii. p. 141.

the

the gates of Moscow to be thrown open to all the honours of a well earned triumph : a ceremony which that capital had never seen, and which, from its meritorious design to encourage the spirit of public virtue, deserves perhaps to be enrolled with those which graced the meridian days of ancient Rome.

⁶⁶ On this memorable occasion, triumphal arches opened a spacious and gratifying entrance to the capital. In a slow, and long procession, the conquerors of Azof, with crowns on their heads, and attired in their richest habits, passed through these temporary monuments of their fame to the loud strains of music, and to the unfeigned congratulations of the people. Peter, with a modesty truly noble, concealed himself amidst the crowd on this illustrious day, which the fondness of his subjects might justly have hailed as the new æra of national prosperity and renown. But the most conspicuous personage in this glorious scene was field-marshal Cheremetef, who passed along on horseback to the applauses of the multitude, in a magnificent dress of black velvet, after the German fashion, with his drawn sword and a white plume gracefully nodding on his head ; after whom a

⁶⁶ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 110. Vita di Pietro il Grande, p. 80. Lacombe, p. 148. Mem. du Regne de Pierre le Grand, tom. i. p. 146.

long train of Turks and Tatars exposed themselves to the public sight ; but every eye, disregarding their appearance, was fixed with peculiar satisfaction on the unhappy object who closed this procession.

The⁶⁷ perfidious Jacob was drawn in a large car, upon which was erected a high gibbet. Two executioners stood by his side ; and behind him were placed the whips and hatchets the instruments of his punishment. On his fallen head hung the Turkish crescent, and on his breast was affixed a paper which contained, in large characters, these disgraceful words : " This wretch has changed his religion four times, and betrayed his God and this country."

The early history of this man may be comprised in a few words. An adventurous spirit led him from Germany, the place of his nativity, to the capital of Russia, where his uncommon merit in a science which was then in its infancy amongst the Russians, and which has been allowed by men skilled in the destruction of the human species to have decided the fate of most of our modern battles, soon raised him to the rank of captain of the guards. Educated in the bosom of the Catholic church, convenience or caprice

⁶⁷ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 248, 249.

transformed him into a doubtful protestant; his interest, the god to which he paid the sincerest homage, next converted him to the Greek church; and, lastly, to profess an obedience to the doctrines of the Koran; while desertion terminated his eventful life on the scaffold.

⁶⁸ From the subjected town of Azof, the arbitrary Czar, moved either by the fickleness of his attachment, or by the intrigues of party, had dispatched a letter to Moscow, which commanded Eudoxia, the daughter of Fedor Sopoukhin, whom he had espoused during the administration of Sophia from political motives, to retire to the monastery of Susdal, and to take the name of Helena. From the dross of vague conjecture, it is difficult to extract the pure ore of truth. Some writers have darkly hinted their suspicions that the uncommon beauty of a young lady named Möens⁶⁹ produced this unexpected change; while others, with a positiveness perhaps occasioned by the discovery of the real cause, have declared that Eudoxia was stripped of all the honours of her rank, by the arts of a favourite, whose animosity she

⁶⁸ Korb. *Diarium Itineris in Moscoviam*.

⁶⁹ One writer even boldly affirms, "*Le dessein de Pierre I. étoit épouser Mademoiselle Möens.*" See *Hist. de la Czarina Eudochia Federowna*, in the *Anecdotes du Règne de Pierre Premier*, Par. 1745, p. 12.

had

had provoked by her rash derision of his origin ⁷⁰.

Among the characters which the edifying page of history has presented to our sight, starting from the lowest insignificance to seize, by their multifarious talents, the highest honours which the splendour of an empire can bestow and the ambition of a subject enjoy, the life of Mentchikoff, the enemy of Eudoxia and the intimate companion of Peter, affords to a contemplative mind a most instructive example of the triumph of genius over the casual though potent advantages of illustrious birth.

The descent of this extraordinary man is still doubtful, notwithstanding all the opinative conjectures which have been thrown on this subject by the unskilful malice of his enemies, who unintentionally exalt and not degrade his merit, by attacking the meanness of his pedigree. When this future prince of Ingria and of the Roman empire (who, in the course of a long and eventful life ⁷¹, was destined to reign with absolute sway under

⁷⁰ Mottley, vol. i. p. 65. See a note in Gordon, vol. ii. p. 281.; and Motraye's Travels, Lond. 1732, p. 113.

⁷¹ Mentchikoff may be said to have touched the extremes of human greatness and misery, in his splendid palace of Oranienbaum, and at his wooden hovel in Siberia. See an interesting anecdote in Chantreau, vol. ii. p. 24—26., to confirm this assertion.

the name of a woman⁷², and to betrothe his daughter to the grandson of his royal master) first attracted the notice and lasting friendship of Peter, it is said that he sold pastry⁷³ to the people and valets on the square of the palace. His open countenance, deeply imprinted with the marks of sense and spirit, recommended him to the attention of the Czar, while his attendance on his person afforded him frequent and successful opportunities of unfolding the various powers of a bold, and capacious mind. The good sense of Peter, taught from experience to acknowledge that rank without talents was but a feeble support of government, gloried to ennoble and to enrich an object so deserving of his warmest attachment. And the pastry-cook boy soon trod the paths of greatness in the rank of general and minister, with dignity,

⁷² "Le gouvernement (when Catharine lost the promoter of her greatness, her renowned husband,) n'étoit autre chose que le vouloir despotique du Prince Menschikow." See the words of Count Munnich in his *Ebauche*, p. 64.

⁷³ Among the several historical accounts transmitted to us of this celebrated personage, the *Memoirs* of Manstein are entitled to peculiar notice from their authentic and impartial expressions. The general who follows Mentschikoff with a close and steady eye, from his rise to his fall, also embraces the popular opinion, that he filled this humble station when he first became known to Peter; p. 11, 12, &c.

wisdom, valour, and firmness⁷⁴. But England has to lament and censure the guilty emoluments of a Bacon and Marlborough; and Russia must be obliged to confess that the picture of Mentchikoff is greatly disfigured by the stains of inordinate⁷⁵ avarice and oppression.

The period was now arrived when the Czar announced his intention of visiting the chief states of Europe. The superior understandings of the second Ivan, Boris Goudonof, and Alexis, while masters of the great estate of Russia, had laboured to ameliorate their vast and valuable property, by calling to their favour enlightened men, from different parts of Europe, to shew their vassals the laws and regulations of civilized communities. But Peter, actuated by a more generous and ardent zeal, resolved to descend from his throne, and in the quality of a private spectator to cast

⁷⁴ In Gordon's History of Peter the Great, we read that he possessed none of these honourable qualities, vol. ii. p. 274—280. But the writer who seeks the path of truth must not adopt this general for his guide when he speaks either of Sophia or Mentchikoff, as he looks too often through the glass of party and personal prejudices to do justice either to their talents or virtues.

⁷⁵ Confett removes a load of shame and guilt from the back of Mentchikoff, when he says that it was the policy of Peter to make him the means of oppressing the nobles, p. 38.

abroad

abroad a piercing and comprehensive eye on the constitution, manners, commerce, and liberal and mechanical professions of the most polished nations.

The execution of this patriotic employment, however, was unexpectedly retarded by the obstinacy and superstition of the ignorant people and ignorant clergy. It was the beneficent intention of Peter to be accompanied by some young men of high rank, whose gratitude, and curiosity, he had flattered himself would have been excited by the most distant prospect of this voyage of improvement. But they knew little; and their dislike and abhorrence of strangers, which was so favourable to the spirit of barbarity, did not dispose them to extend their knowledge. The clergy, in the fulness of their zeal to counteract a design which so greatly alarmed and scandalized their religious prejudices, scrupled not to abuse the authority of the scriptures⁷⁶. The current of popular opposition thus raised by the church, ran with such fury and strength, as overwhelmed for a time, the adoption of a plan which so gloriously proposed to scatter the seeds of civility and science over a barren land.

⁷⁶ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 148, 149. Banks, p. 81, 82.

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When the public discontent hovers round the throne, the sons of rebellion generally rear their mischievous heads. A most fatal conspiracy was now premeditated, which, if it had not been crushed by the heroic firmness of Peter, might have plunged all Russia once more into the horrors of foreign and domestic discord. Two officers of the Strelitzes, inflamed by ambition, judged the present moment propitious, when the innovating measures of Peter had soured the minds of the people, to perform their long-intended and difficult work, of the assassination of their monarch, and seizure of his government⁷⁷. But Sikel and Soukanin (so were these candidates for royalty called) were prevented from knowing whether the fruits of their ambition were bitter or sour, by the prudence of two other confederates, who, having more carefully balanced the greatness of the danger against the probable chance of success, embraced the wise resolution of revealing to the Czar the designs of their associates.

Their discovery afforded Peter an admirable opportunity of shewing his subjects that

⁷⁷ For this conspiracy see *Anecdotes Originales de Pierre le Grand*, p. 18—22.

his was not that mechanical courage which could be quickened and stopped by the noise or silence of warlike instruments, but that firmness of mind which could meet the extremest danger, alone and undaunted. In the ample confessions of these penitents, the monarch had learnt that the conspirators had fixed to assemble in the evening at the house of Soukanin, having already resolved to issue from this place about the hour of midnight, with the diabolical intention of setting fire to the imperial palace, and of reaching their sovereign's heart, amidst the disorder of the general conflagration. With a celerity suitable to the emergency of the affair, the captain of the guard received the command of Peter to surround the house of treason at eleven o'clock; but in the multitude of his great and various avocations, Peter imagined that ten was the hour which he had appointed for the execution of his orders.

This important evening was far spent, when the Czar, attended by a single detch-tchick or page, repaired at half-past ten, to this infamous crew with the design of interrogating them in their first surprise. But on coming, he found, to his great astonishment, that his guards were not yet arrived. For a few moments, he stood in doubtful anxiety whether to proceed or to retire. At length,

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relying on their punctuality, he entered the house in the full expectation of beholding the conspirators in custody. But we can conceive, though not describe, his amazement on opening an apartment where sat this band, stimulating each other's courage in copious draughts of wine.

In a situation so utterly defenceless, the bravest heart might have acknowledged the temporary dominion of fear. The deliberate coolness which marked the conduct of the Czar on this critical occasion, compels us to think that he felt not its bewildering emotion. With all that presence of mind which the danger of the affair so eminently required, he dissipated the mute astonishment and suspicion of the conspirators, by informing them that passing before the house, and observing a more than ordinary shew of light, he had imagined that the master was resigning himself with his friends to the enjoyments of the table, and that he had entered to participate in their convivial pleasures. This probable reason for his appearance, delivered in a manner the most easy and imposing, instantly lulled all their apprehensions, and the villains, after courteously inviting the monarch to a seat and drinking respectfully his health, reassumed their places with a satisfaction perhaps redoubled from the recollection
that

that their victim was now within their grasp, without being exposed to the dangerous task of gratifying their revenge amidst the public crowd. The familiar gaiety of Peter still added to confirm the assigned cause of his visit, and the time was passing away in loud and licentious mirth, when one of the assassins, more cautious, more eager, or more fearful than the rest, whispered in a low tone of voice, *It is time ; Not yet*, was the instant reply of Soukanin. The attention of Peter caught these important words. An effort of inflexible resolution was now his only resource. Instantly, and with a look that painted all the terrible anger of his soul, he pronounced, to their astonishment, these decisive words: "If the time be not fit, wretches, to consummate the crime, it is for its punishment."

The face of rebellion now vanished. The slaves, pale and spiritless, shook with fear at the stern voice and countenance of their master. He ordered one of them to assist him and his page in securing the rest; and, such was the ascendancy of his genius", that this singular order was immediately obeyed. In the midst of this remarkable scene, the

" How finely might the pencil of that neglected genius Barry, (our late Academic Professor of painting) enrich the naked canvass with the authoritative countenance of the Czar, and the mute obedience of the conspirators.

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guards arrived, and the conspirators, filled with grief and shame, and more probably with a just apprehension of their doom, confessed their guilt at the feet of their sovereign⁷⁹, in hopes, perhaps, of mitigating the severity of their sentence. But indulgence to rebels could not be ranked among the virtues of Peter; and, indeed if his heart had been cast in a softer mould, we must on this occasion have praised his humanity, at the expence of his judgment, since forgiveness would not have promoted duty or discipline. All suffered for their treason, while the me-

⁷⁹ But this is not the only instance which history can produce, where the Czar's seasonable presence of mind defeated the intentions of the desperate. In a visit to a Swede, who had formerly appeared at Moscow, in the rank of ambassador, the royal sledge was stopped by another, which contained eight robbers, while the Czar was accompanied only by two pages. In this critical situation, Peter strikingly evinced a soul incapable of fear. With the utmost coolness, and with a successful strength, he dragged one of the robbers into his sledge, and then quietly pursued his journey. Arrived at the Envoy's, the robber perceived the greatness of the person whom he had dared to attack, and supplicated for death without undergoing an examination. The royal promise of forgiveness and reward was offered to him, if he discovered the haunts of his accomplices: he consented, and the whole crew, except the informer, received the just punishment of their depredations. The reader may find in the same page, another anecdote, where the Czar, on a similar occasion, no less eminently displayed his prudence and courage. *Le Clerc*, tom. iii. p. 370.

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mory of their crime and arrest was preserved in tablets of brass. Most writers have been induced, by their prejudices, to connect Sophia in this confederacy; but the evidence of these dying men, and dying men are above the influence of bribery, sufficiently establishes her innocence, and their malevolence.

"Released from this danger, the ruler of Russia thought that the foul breath of faction was sufficiently extinguished for him safely to commit the reins of government into the hands of the Boyar Strechnef, prince of Romodanovski, (with orders to consult the other Boyars on all affairs of importance) and to execute his favourite plan of visiting the most distinguished courts of Europe". In this celebrated journey, it is not our intention to invade the privileges of the biographer, who is the most suitable companion to the Czar; but were we inclined to trespass on his province, a Gibbon or Robertson might even despair of amusing the mind by a new picture of his travels, which are so familiar to every description of readers.

⁷⁹ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 255. Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 150. says, "Les coupables ne chargèrent point Sophie, mais leur reticence n'est pas une preuve de son innocence, les coupables étoient fanatiques et Sophie ambitionnoit le trône." The clearest eye will be seized with a dimness of sight by gazing too often on the rock of prejudice and faction.

⁸⁰ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 151.

To us belongs the important and pleasing duty of observing his various improvements in the state, which may be said to owe their existence, in a great degree, to his departure from Russia.

The most laudable curiosity is sometimes gratified at the expence of prudence, and the long absence of Peter may tend to confirm this observation. While he was preparing to leave Vienna⁸¹, to contemplate the fallen greatness of Rome, the flames of a new rebellion unexpectedly burst forth, which, if they had not been timely stopped by the prudence and intrepidity of Gordon, might have proved fatal to his throne and family. ⁸²A large body of the Strelitzes had received the orders of their absent Czar to support the Elector of Saxony's interest, if necessary, on the frontiers of Poland, under the command of Michael Romodanovski. On a sudden eight thousand of them seized their arms, deposed their chiefs, replaced them by others more favourable to their views, and resolved to march without delay to Moscow, to choose a regent during the minority of Alexes Petrovitz. Their late general had however sufficient time given him, though unable to con-

⁸¹ Mottley, vol. i. p. 110.

⁸² See the details of this revolt in Gordon, vol. i. p. 122
—128.

trol them, to convey intelligence of their formidable approach.

Chein, the chief commander of Moscow ^{1698.} in the absence of Peter, and Gordon, marched to them at the head of four thousand of the neighbouring gentry, with a body of three thousand foot, and well-served artillery, consisting of twenty-seven field-pieces, from six to ten pounders. But the promise of the Czar's pardon, on their submission, unfortunately tempted them to interpret this offer into weakness, and the weak are seldom gifted with the powers of persuasion. More presumptuous than ever from this mild proposal, Gordon was reduced to the unavoidable necessity of devoting some of these malcontents to destruction for the safety of Moscow. An engagement ensued, and the strength of loyalty over treason was soon attested by the complete overthrow of the rebels. Those who escaped the fire of the artillery, were placed in different prisons until the return of the Czar, a punishment which his tyrannical revenge rendered less merciful than immediate death.

This insurrection recalled the presence of the sovereign, whose return was the signal for acts which deluged the streets of Moscow with human blood. We shall spare the hu-

manity of the reader the minute detail of those cruelties, which so incontrovertibly proves Peter to be equally unmindful in this instance of the duties of a ruler, the charity of a christian, and the feelings of a man¹³. After acting the character of judge and executioner to the most guilty of the Strelitzes¹⁴, two thousand of whom were beheaded, and affixed to the walls of the capital, he proceeded to the more justifiable sentence of the abolition of their name and power. With all that energy which marked the conduct of Peter, when pursuing any important measure, he dispersed these servants, or more often disturbers of the throne, into several regiments, as Sophia had done, assigned to his troops the common and modern appellation of *sol-*

¹³ The reader may see, in the *Diarium of Korb*, a minute and horrible account of their sufferings. Gordon, with all his partiality to Peter, cannot disguise his cruelty, vol. i. p. 129. On the authority of M. de Printz, grand marshal of Prussia, and ambassador to Peter, the king of Prussia relates, that the revengeful Czar dispatched many of the Strelitzes with his own hand. He also invited M. de Printz to participate in the bloody work; but the ambassador possessed too humane and noble a spirit to degrade himself and nation by the performance of so barbarous an office. See the whole transaction in the *Lettres du P. R. de Prusse, et de M. de Voltaire*, p. 307, 308. tom. 84. *Cœuvres de Voltaire*, 1785.

¹⁴ "Due mila Strelizzi furono decapitati ed impiccati alle mura della città." *Vita di Pietro il Grande*, p. 99, 100.

datec ⁸⁵, soldiers, and kept only two particular regiments for his body guard ⁸⁶.

Thus terminated a rebellion, which the impartiality of history may ascribe to the machinations of Sophia, whose heart still nourished ambition in the gloom of the convent. An unmanly spirit of revenge ⁸⁷ prompted her brother to disfigure the convent where she resided with the odious sight of the gibbets and the bodies of the Strelitzes ⁸⁸, whilst three of their leaders were hung so close to the windows of her apartment, that she could have touched their bodies with her hand ⁸⁹. Three years afterwards, this former sovereign of Russia died in the forty-sixth year of her age, under the monastic name of Susanna ⁹⁰.

Delivered from two most obnoxious ene- 1699.
mies, who always seized each favourable

⁸⁵ Perry, p. 184.; Mottley, vol. i. p. 112. See a History of Peter by a British Officer in the service of the Czar, p. 89, 90.

⁸⁶ Tooke, vol. ii. p. 72.

⁸⁷ It is amusing enough to observe the reluctant evidence of Le Clerc to this part of Peter's history, and how adroitly he converts sheer cruelty into state policy. We must praise the impartiality of Lacombe on this occasion, who fairly avows the barbarity of Peter, tom. iii. p. 170, 171.

⁸⁸ Gordon, vol. i. p. 130.

⁸⁹ "Tam prope ad ipsas Sophiani cubiculi fenestras, ut Sophia eisdem manu facile possit attingere:" the words of Korb, an eye witness of this horrible scene.

⁹⁰ Cox, vol. ii. p. 47.

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opportunity to disturb his government, the one provoked by that spirit of licentiousness which could not brook the slightest accents of command, the other by her inveterate hatred, he was now able to bestow for some time an uninterrupted attention to those measures which extended in benefit even to the most abject of his subjects.

But the trumpet of war, which that hero, or madman, Charles the twelfth, first sounded from necessity, and afterwards from inclination, with such terrible fury and success, throughout Poland and Denmark, at last diverted the mind of the Czar from his peaceable objects, and urged him to summon his hardy Russians into the field. Nor safety, nor revenge, but ambition, was the real motive which enticed Peter to draw his sword against the victorious Swede. He had cast a longing eye on the rich provinces of Ingria, Esthonia, and the numerous islands of the Baltic; and the extensive schemes of ambition, which the fears of vanquished Poland and Denmark ascribed to Charles, afforded him the fairest opportunity of colouring his real designs with the specious pretence of assisting the drooping cause of his allies. In the first campaign the Swedes maintained the greatness of their military fame at Narva by the utter discomfiture of thirty-four thousand
Russians.

Russians". We should however be inclined 1700.
to think, that nine thousand Swedes would not have beat such a numerous army, whatever advantages they might have derived from their united zeal and discipline, if the active spirit of the Czar had not called him to Pscove and Novgorod, when this battle was fought, in order to raise more troops in those territories to stem the torrent of Swedish success. But perhaps no prince possessed in a more eminent degree than Peter, that penetration and vigour so necessary for carrying on affairs with success in the most dangerous junctures. The terror which the name of Charles now inspired, would have alone filled an ordinary prince with utter despair for the safety of his throne, much less would he have been able to suggest those bold and happy expedients which could animate his desponding subjects. The natural intrepidity of Peter however placed him above all fear, and his hopes to avert the impending danger arose from the consciousness that his talents fully equalled his great station.

²¹ Gordon, vol. i. p. 150. Some writers exaggerate the losses of the Russians to eighty, nay even an hundred thousand men. The prayer of the Russians to their tutelary Saint Nicholas on their defeats, is not unworthy the reader's perusal, as it strongly paints the superstitious manners of the times. See Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 193, 194.

As Russia had not only to lament the loss of so many of her soldiers at Narva, but also of an hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, the first step which he took in his present exigency to afford effectual aid, may be seen in the order to melt the superfluous bells of the churches and monasteries for cannon : his next measure, as the danger was so pressing, and by losing a single moment might become irretrievable, was productive of the best consequences. To recruit his forces, he proclaimed that freedom should be the reward of all those vassals who should flock to his standard⁵². By these spirited efforts, he put his empire on so formidable a footing that although the Swedish power was daily prevailing, he no longer dreaded the furious ambition of Charles would overturn his capital.

Nine years after this memorable defeat, in which intermediate time he had also gained some trophies at Marienburg, Nosterburg, and Nyenschantz, in the neighbourhood of which citadel he laid the foundation of that magnificent city⁵³, which still perpetuates his name ;
and

⁵² Tooke, vol. ii. p. 76.

⁵³ Yet St. Petersburg, with all the additional splendour which it has received from the munificent hand of that extraordinary woman Catharine the second, whose taste for architecture, and ambition to adorn the place of imperial residence, has left so many durable monuments of her bounty,

and conquered Dorpt, Narva, and recovered his ancient inheritance, Ingria, the battle of Pultowa was fought; which immortalizes the renown of Peter, and the rashness of Charles. This is one of those engagements which fixes the attention of ages, as its consequences involved the immediate safety of a whole nation. The active spirit of Charles had long been preying on the vitals of the Polish kingdom, and had at last succeeded, in spite of Peter's men and money, in accomplishing his long promised threat of expelling his ally Augustus from his throne; there can be little doubt therefore, if the genius and fortune of the Swedish hero had prevailed in this famous battle, the Ukraine would have been no longer the theatre of his bold operations, but the capital of Russia would have trembled at the presence of the haughty conqueror.

The twenty-seventh of June was the day 1709. on which Peter, by one great blow, retrieved his own glory and decided the fate of the two crowns, near the town of Pultowa, in the Ukraine, where the Russians possessed several

"is as yet only an immense outline, (to quote the opinion of a judicious and impartial traveller,) which will require future empresses, and almost future ages, to complete." See Wraxall's Tour through some Northern Parts of Europe; Lond. 1775; p. 236.

magazines". We may enjoy the advantage of relating the principal circumstances of this celebrated battle as the victor has expressed them in his interesting journal. Six days before this memorable event, the Czar with all his army had passed the river Vorskla, which washes the walls of Pultowa, resolved to hazard an engagement; and in the evening of the fourth day, they found themselves within half a league of the enemy, where they halted, unwilling to abide the event of a general action. In the night they threw up an intrenchment between themselves and the Swedes; their cavalry was posted in the woods, and covered by several redoubts furnished with artillery.

Charles was betrayed into the most imminent danger by the fearless curiosity with which he reconnoitered the dispositions of the Russians. As he was examining their works with a general's eye, he observed a small number of Cossacks reposing themselves in indolent security around a large fire. Unperceived, he dismounted from his horse, and aimed his carbine with such judgment, as to kill the foremost of the party. The Cossacks, enraged at the fate of their companion, instantly seized their arms, and fired; one of

" Vita di Pietro il Grande, p. 187.

their shots wounded the leg of the Swedish monarch, who so long disguised his pain from the observation of his attendants, that they did not perceive his misfortune until the blood from his boot revealed the distressing secret. The Russians derived an effectual aid from this accident.

At the break of day, a corps of Swedes, under the command of the Generals Rosen and Schlipenbach, charged the enemy with such irresistible fury, that the cavalry gave way in disorder, and two redoubts also became the rewards of their valour. Already the Swedes flattered themselves with reaping the honours of a decisive victory; but their presumption proved fatal to themselves and to their country. In their eagerness to improve their success, they advanced with such precipitate rashness, that they lost sight of the rest of the army, and were thrown into confusion by the vigorous fire kept up by the enemy's cannon. Schlipenbach, in the danger of being surrounded, was obliged to retire into a wood, where the cavalry, directed by the judicious Czar, rushed on them; and their united efforts soon compelled the astonished general to pay the forfeit of his temerity, by the surrender of himself and his troops; Rosen, in the intrenchments, shared a similar fate.

Peter,

Peter, who had to endure feelings peculiar to himself, for he had not only staked his life, but the existence of all his great undertakings on the success of this day, had observed as he was darting his comprehensive eye to the different scenes of danger, and studying every possible advantage, that the principal body of the Swedish army proceeded through the redoubts with a degree of confusion unworthy of their famous discipline: these irregular motions he converted into a presage of victory, and therefore judged the present moment most favourable for an attack.

The tumult and clamour of the general assault commenced at nine in the morning. Charles, who was foremost in every danger, was carried in a litter by his Drabans, and with his pistol in his hand, went from rank to rank, urging every motive of honour to excite the courage of his soldiers. Both of these rivals in the race of glory were careless of their own safety, and watchful only to display, on every moment, the ability of a chief and the valour of a soldier. A ball entered the saddle of Peter's horse, and his hat²³ was pierced with several shots as he

²³ This memorable hat is still to be viewed in the cabinet of the Academy of Sciences. See Storck's *Tableau de St. Petersburg*.

was imparting his calm and skilful orders⁹⁶. While Charles was rallying his despairing troops⁹⁷, a discharge of cannon broke his litter into pieces, and killed at the same time one of his Drabans.

The whole engagement did not last above two hours. The conflict between the two lines of infantry was long, obstinate, and bloody; but Charles had at last the mortification of beholding the irreparable flight of his bravest soldiers before those men whose warlike efforts he had so long been accustomed to view with the utmost contempt. Upwards of nine thousand Swedes perished in the field of battle, according to the calculation of the conquerors; while the multitude of wounded among the Russians, which amounted to near three thousand, was much greater than those of the slain. The vanquished might with truth seek to hide their want of success under their vast inferiority of numbers, but these advantages must be counterbalanced by the remembrance that none

⁹⁶ Even Frederick of Prussia, in whose eyes Peter is rarely an object of admiration, allows that he performed on this memorable day the part of a great general. See *Hist. de la Maison de Brandenburg*.

⁹⁷ The Swedes were twice deceived with the prospect of success. When the Czar's hat was pierced with a musquet ball, the Swedes, says Lacombe, *crient victoire*, p. 246.

but the first line of the Russians had looked on the faces of their enemies".

A generous concern was expressed by the Czar for the fate of the vanquished king; he confessed and admired his great exploits, and esteem even maintained an alliance with tenderness in the heart of this ferocious man. He dined on the field of victory with the principal officers and Swedish generals, who had surrendered to his victorious arms. Count Piper, who had enjoyed a pre-eminence over all the Swedish nobles in the affection of his unfortunate prince, had voluntarily submitted himself to the mercy of the enemy, despairing of all hopes of a successful resistance: he also was invited to the table of the conqueror. Peter complimented the courage of the Swedish generals in terms highly flattering to their vanity, and returned his sword to Field-Marshal Reinschild: he then drank the health of his masters, politely adding, that this title was appropriate to the Swedes, to whom he was indebted for his knowledge of the art of war.

⁸⁵ Journal de Pierre le Grand; à Berlin, 1773; p. 234—241. In a letter of the Czar's dispatched to Admiral Apraxin, from the field of battle, to give him the first intelligence of his glorious success, he makes this just and emphatic remark in the postscript: *Graces à Dieu, voilà la pierre fondamentale de Peterbourg solidement posée.* See Anecdotes Originales de Pierre le Grand, p. 324.

Prince Mentchikoff, who had established his military fame⁹⁹ in this action, was dispatched in pursuit of the vanquished. His soldiers, animated by their late success, soon overtook these exhausted bands. The Swedes far surpassed them in numbers, but dispirited by their recent disasters, they were more inclined to consult their safety by a surrender, than by their intrepidity. Mentchikoff, perceiving their deplorable state and aversion to an engagement, commissioned an officer to repair to Levenhaupt their commander with proposals of capitulation. They were such as conquerors usually dictate; the loss of their arms and freedom was comprised among the rest of the articles; and the despair of the Swedes delivered both up to General Bauer¹⁰⁰,
an

⁹⁹ In this memorable battle, the favourite of Peter had three horses shot under him; Coxe, vol. ii. p. 214.

¹⁰⁰ There is a story related of this general by an authentic writer, which places him in such an amiable light, and conveys at the same time such a severe reproach to that *false pride* which counsels man to guard against the discovery of a plebeian origin as a mortal wound to his reputation, after genius, caprice, or fortune, has mounted him on the car of greatness, that we shall deem no apology necessary to the manly reader for the length of its insertion. The orders of the Czar having fixed this general in Holstein at the conclusion of the year 1702, he invited one day his principal officers to an entertainment, and dispatched at the same time a similar message to a miller and his wife, whose decent habitation arose near the town of Hassum. The miller, to

an officer who had highly distinguished himself in this engagement by his skill and bravery.

Thus, with the exception of two or three officers who fled with their enraged monarch,

whom the Russian name was so formidable, felt great uneasiness at this invitation, as he interpreted it not into an honourable courtesy, but into an absolute command. With fear and wonder, the anxious pair sought the camp, where Bauer himself received them, seated them both by his side at the table, and exhorted them to banish every apprehension of danger. During the dinner he questioned his humble guest concerning the actual state of his family, and after he had ascertained the number of his children, he asked him whether he had any brothers. I had one, replied the miller, but as he entered into the army at a very early age, and no tidings have ever been received of him, I must therefore conclude that he has fallen in some engagement. Then General Bauer addressing himself to the assembly, thus emphatically expressed the noble feelings of truth, virtue, and affection: "Gentlemen, you have always been inquisitive to know my origin; your curiosity shall now be satisfied; I drew my first breath in the mill *which belongs to my brother, whom you behold here with my sister.*" On saying these words, he arose from the table, threw himself into the arms of his astonished relatives, and requested the company to dine with him the next day in *the paternal mill*. The reader might justly accuse us of diminishing the effect of this pleasing and instructive scene, if we did not add, that the generous Bauer settled his brother in a happy independence, and charged himself with the education of his nephews. In my mind, this anecdote *for its moral excellence*, is almost worthy to be inscribed in letters of gold. In justice to the honour of the Czar, we must observe, that he admired and praised this exemplary conduct of the *truly magnanimous general*. Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 350.

into

into the Turkish dominions, the whole Swedish army was either slaughtered or captured by the Russian arms ¹⁰⁰.

Such was the fate of men, who, from a long and uninterrupted course of victories, had claimed the proud, but precarious title of invincible ¹⁰¹. The conqueror of Charles, the legislator of a numerous people, the creator of a new power, the ally of Poland and China, whose arms and authority were carried from the shores of the Frozen to the Euxine and Caspian seas, and from the gulph of Finland to the Pacific ocean, was raised for this victory, to the rank of Major-General, by the approbation and consent of his superior officers. They granted him at the same time the rank of rear-admiral in the service of the sea. Thus did the Czar's example ¹⁰² discipline his people, arouse their spirits, and call forth their talents.

¹⁰⁰ Levasque, tom. iv. p. 376.

¹⁰¹ Fontenelle, in his *Eloge du Czar Pierre*, tom. iii. p. 202., speaking of the Czar's determination to advance in military rank only by his superior merit, observes with his usual discernment and spirit, " Si c'étoit là une espèce de comédie, du moins elle étoit instructive, et méritoit d'être jouée devant tous les rois."

¹⁰² " Non hanno gli homini maggiori nimico che la troppa prosperita." *Hist. d'Italia*, lib. xiv. p. 399. The veterans of Charles may exemplify this remark of the sagacious Guiccardini.

1711. Two years after this glorious event, which fixed immoveable the foundations of St. Petersburg, the Turks on the river Pruth exposed to the triumphant Czar the sad vicissitudes of war. The origin and conclusion of this enterprize, so salutary to the Turks, so inglorious to Peter, may be dismissed in a few words.

When ¹⁰³ Charles fled from a pursuing enemy to the friendly frontiers of Turkey, the greatness of his name had long attracted the veneration of the Divan, and contrary to the expectation of his foes and to the usual injustice of mankind, it suffered no abatement in their eyes by his present misfortunes. Perhaps their respect and compassion for the fate of Charles did not lose any of its force, by the mortifying remembrance that the same man who had compelled him to assume the suppliant character of a fugitive, had secured the fortress of Azof by his talents and valour. The truce, however, which they renewed the following year with the Russians, induced the vanquished king to believe that they had resolved to run the chance neither of victory nor defeat in this unequal contest with the Czar. But this neutrality was soon destroyed by the mission of Count Poniatovski

¹⁰³ Tooke, vol. ii. p. 91, 92, 93.

to Constantinople, whose abilities were so well employed in the cause of his friend and master Charles, that he not only effected the downfall of the Vizir, whose pacific systems had clashed with his designs, but at last prevailed on the slothful seraglio to unfurl the standard of war.

It is not to be supposed that a prince of Peter's warlike temper of mind, on beholding this pressing and extensive danger, long delayed to meet the Turk in arms. But forgetfulness of the inconstancy of fortune, and contempt of the enemy, (two faults which generally are the forerunners of great evils,) betrayed the Czar into a situation where courage and skill were equally unavailing. Unfortunately reposing an implicit confidence in the succours of Cantemir, the hospodar of Moldavia, and the treacherous vassal of the Ottoman Porte, he advanced into the enemies' country with such a fatal precipitancy¹⁰⁴ that he permitted the Turks and Tatars, whose united force surpassed his in a more than ten-fold proportion, to encompass him on the river Pruth near to the ancient town of Jassy in Moldavia, with the strength of his men consumed by the fatigues of a long march, and their courage depressed by the ap-

¹⁰⁴ See Gordon, vol. ii. p. 58.

prehesion of famine. Despair for the first time rushed into the heart of Peter, at the sight of his actual misery, and the recollection of his past greatness; and the romantic plans of conquest which Charles had formed would now perhaps have been realized, if the adventurous firmness of Catharine ¹⁰⁵, the celebrated partner of his toils as well as pleasures, had not suggested an expedient which liberated him from all the horrors of his situation.

While the disconsolate Czar, in the agony of his grief had retired to his tent and forbade every one, under pain of death, to seek an access to his person ¹⁰⁶, this intrepid woman, dreading more the effects of his convulsions ¹⁰⁷ than anger, eluded the vigilance of the guards, made her way into his tent, and compelled his pride to acknowledge, that to ensure the general safety he must condescend

¹⁰⁵ For the birth, and history of Catharine, we refer the reader to Coxe, vol. ii. p. 277, &c. who has gathered on this subject much curious information from the most authentic quarters.

¹⁰⁶ Chantreau, vol. ii. p. 52.

¹⁰⁷ These convulsions were said (with what truth it is difficult to determine) to be the effects of the poison administered by his sister Sophia. See Lord Whitworth's Account of Russia, as it was in the year 1710, Lond. 1758, p. 57.

to solicit for a peace¹⁰⁸. This resolution was the result of a council of war which her prompt and manly spirit had assembled and harangued. The counsels of Catharine were practised with a success, which exceeded her most sanguine expectations. After collecting all the money and valuables which her scanty stores, and the severe frugality of the army could furnish¹⁰⁹, an officer of merit and confidence set forward to the Vizir with these presents, and a letter from Cheremetef, which contained proposals of peace in the name of his master. During the awful interval, the troops of the desponding emperor had been commanded to fall on the enemy with all their strength, should his overtures be rejected¹¹⁰.

The tardy reply of the Turk occasioned the Russians to advance forty yards; but a favourable answer at length arriving from the Vizir, prevented any desperate measures being undertaken. Between this first servant of the Ottoman court, and the vice chancellor of Russia, Baron Shaffirof, was concluded a

¹⁰⁸ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 411, 412, 413, 414.

¹⁰⁹ Memoires de l'Imperatrice Catherine, Haye, 1728, p. 32. Vita di Pietro il Grande, p. 22.

¹¹⁰ Journal de Pierre le Grand, p. 374, 375.

treaty

treaty¹¹¹ by which the Turks obtained the most rational objects of the war, the restoration of Azof¹¹², the free passage of Charles to his kingdom¹¹³, the demolition of the port of Taganrok on the sea of Zabache, and that of Samara at the mouth of the river of the same name; the other articles were few in number, and of small importance. Thus by no very disgraceful concessions¹¹⁴, did the wisdom of an unlettered woman save the Russians and reserve the important life of the emperor for the future service of his country, which would have been lost perhaps by his own indiscretion and the timid perplexity of his generals¹¹⁵. The instances we believe are very rare

¹¹¹ In Bruce's Memoirs, p. 44. we read "that the peace was concluded in the name of the field-marshal, without the knowledge of the Czar." But the inspecting and absolute disposition of Peter strongly inclines us to dispute the authenticity of this assertion.

¹¹² Vita-di Pietro il Grande, p. 227.

¹¹³ See Mottley, vol. ii. p. 157. for the article relative to the king of Sweden.

¹¹⁴ See Cantemir's Hist. of the Othman Empire; for the noble determination of the Czar not to violate his promise of deserting this prince, p. 453.

¹¹⁵ Several writers have however reduced the interference of Catharine in this critical affair to a very small compass. Motraye in particular denies her raising of the presents, and attributes the deliverance of the Czar solely to the political ability of Shaffirof, p. 103—105. note. But the manifesto of Peter on her coronation where he speaks so pointedly of his

rare both in ancient and modern history, where at the expence of man so much fair commendation can be bestowed on the sense and firmness of the female character.

The conquest of Finland was the next ^{1713.} event which added lustre to the Russian arms, and the conduct of Peter, on this perilous enterprize, most strikingly displays that of a hero eager to sacrifice his life for the general safety, yet still trusting to extricate himself from all his difficulties by the judicious choice of his measures. After Helsingfors and Abo had fallen into the hands of the Czar, the fleet of gallies under the command of the brave general-admiral Apraxin, pursued their course towards Finland to the latitude of Abo. The ships of the line were sent to Revel, and the Czar embarked with the rank of rear-admiral ¹⁶. Some light vessels were stationed between the fleets for the purposes of communication. The fleet of the enemy lay at an-

his obligations to her at this place, must be deduced as a strong argument in support of her acting the principal part in this great affair. We feel, therefore, little or no reluctance in subscribing our assent to the following words of Chantreau ; “ La paix de Pruth, qui sauva l’armée Russe d’une destruction inévitable, a été entièrement attribuée à l’habileté de Catherine, et l’a été justement, malgré ce qu’en ont pu dire les detracteurs de cette princesse, ou ceux qui ont écrit d’après eux.”

¹⁶ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 439, 440.

chor more strong in ships than the Russians, but of an inferior force in galleys, and consequently less adapted for skilful manœuvres in a sea interspersed with rocks. After the skilful and illustrious rear-admiral had discovered their position and strength, orders were issued to proceed towards Angout; a very narrow isthmus appeared between this place and Razabourgh. The possession of the enemies' fleet in this situation appeared hopeless, if the genius of the Czar had not conceived and executed a plan which totally remedied the deficiency of nature. A road was formed of strong and solid planks, along which eighty galleys were drawn over rollers by dint of strength, and launched into the water to the astonishment of the Swedes. Erenschild the rear-admiral of the Swedes, who had run out in a frigate from Angout to observe the movements of the Russians, was emboldened to the attack by the alluring hope of an easy victory.

Impatient of delay he proceeded with more courage than prudence against the vanguard, led on by the Czar himself¹¹⁷, who performed on this day, the various and opposite duties of general and pilot, of soldier and sai-

¹¹⁷ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 375, 376.

lor¹¹⁸, to the admiration of his friends and the terror of his enemies. Always animating in the hour of danger the valour of his subjects by his own example, he himself engaged the frigate of Erenschild, and with such skill and bravery as decided the engagement. The combat lasted two whole hours¹¹⁹ terrible from the despair of the admiral and the fury of the Czar. The Swedish artillery was productive of more terror than effect, as the direction of their guns was not sufficiently low. They at last fell into close action, gallies grappled with gallies, and the boarding became so desperate and general, that slaughter and confusion presently reigned around. When the efforts of the Swedes had entirely subsided, the Russians numbered, among the fruits of this important victory, the brave and wounded admiral¹²⁰, his frigate, eight gallies, and three small vessels. The rest of the Swedish fleet fled with all the haste of fear towards Stockholm, while the victorious Czar took possession of the island of Aland,

1714.

¹¹⁸ " Il Czar fece in quella zuffa le funzioni di generale, e di nocchiere, di soldato, e di marinajo, ordinando colla sua voce, eseguenda colla sue mani, animando colla suo ezempio." Vita di Pietro il Grande, p. 239.

¹¹⁹ Lacombe, p. 291. Mottley, vol. ii. p. 209. Gordon says three, vol. ii. p. 58.

¹²⁰ Bruce, in his Memoirs, p. 128. relates, " that Erenschild received seven wounds in this desperate engagement." See likewise Fontenelle's Eloge du Czar Pierre, p. 208.

which

which is but twelve leagues distant from that capital.

We can readily imagine what a sleepless night the court of Stockholm must have passed, when they were informed of the near residence of the Czar. A long series of victories had too fatally ascertained the war-like abilities of their neighbour, whose ambition (of which they had very solid proofs to justify their suspicions) would lead his most serious thoughts to the conquest of their terrified city ¹²¹. But the misfortune of Charles and the sad reverse of fortune on the banks of the Pruth, had warned the adventurous spirit of Peter not to undertake a part so full of danger from its failure, and so unpromising of any permanent advantage from its success. Content therefore with the more safe and moderate pleasure of striking terror into the very heart of Sweden, and of proving the value of the marine, which owed its birth to his industry and genius, and its skill to English instruction ¹²², he entrusted the command
of

¹²¹ Mottley, vol. ii. p. 211.

¹²² We may conceive with what eminent success naval tactics were cultivated by the Russian youth, who were dispatched into England by the sagacious Czar, on the permission of our court, when the cautious and experienced admiral Apraxin ventured to declare that he would defy any of our flags to put a stratagem on them with which they
were

of Finland to prince Golitzin and steered to St. Petersburg with all his prizes ¹²³.

In his course thither, he evinced in a most conspicuous manner, that superior courage of the mind which, unassisted by any great example, can meet death in its most terrific shape, when the safety of his people demanded. The fleet was encountered by a furious tempest; the darkness of the night increased the sense of danger, the men could no longer maintain the character of experienced mariners, and their limbs were so motionless by fear, that they were not equal even to the attempt of saving their lives. In this general consternation, their ruin must have been inevitable, if his abilities had not prepared a seasonable relief, if he had not felt that the first in rank should shew himself

were not acquainted. See a spirited and judicious pamphlet (the composition, I believe, of an Englishman who filled a diplomatic station in Russia) intitled, "Truth is but Truth as it is timed, or our Ministry's present Measures against the Muscovite vindicated." Lond. 1719, p. 7. If there is any authority to be found in the report which some time ago prevailed of our gallant and scientific admiral Sir Borlase Warren having assumed the honours of the diplomatic character for the express purpose of instructing the Russians in the theory and practice of our naval tactics, we recommend the perusal of this curious passage to our ministers.

¹²³ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 442.

the first in spirit, when the time is pregnant with destruction. In opposition to the urgent entreaties and undisguised fears of his most intrepid officers, he fearlessly descended into a large boat, and in this dangerous conveyance proceeded more than two miles by sea, (every moment expecting to be swallowed up by the waves,) till he at last gained the land, where he lighted a great fire, the promised signal of safety, which revived the lost courage of the sailors, and with their courage, the power of preserving the fleet ¹²⁴.

The victors entered St. Petersburg with all the deserved honours of a triumph ¹²⁵; and when they had been saluted by the acclamations of the people, the gallant admiral Erenschild reluctantly exposed himself to the public gaze at the head of his equally brave companions. The frigate and gallies taken from the Swedes were ranged on the Neva. From the principal streets the glorious procession was conducted to the citadel ¹²⁶, where on a throne was seated prince Fedor Romodanovski, to receive that homage which the modesty or policy of Peter invariably declined. The prince Czar (for such was the

¹²⁴ Mem. de. l'Empire Ruffien, p. 54. and Vita di Pietro il Grande, p. 239, 240.

¹²⁵ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 443.

¹²⁶ Fontenelle's Eloge du Czar Pierre I. p. 208.

title bestowed on this customary representative of the sovereign on all memorable occasions) commanded the rear-admiral Peter Alexiovits to stand before his prince and give a recital of the famous battle of Angout. The¹²⁷ great ruler of Russia, in a uniform of an officer of the marine, obeyed the mandate with every possible demonstration of respect. The exertions of the officers were rewarded with medals of gold; silver¹²⁸ ones testified the merit of the sailors and soldiers, and the services of the Czar raised him to the rank of vice-admiral¹²⁹. In this splendid and edifying comedy, the foreign ministers and great officers of the court bore their parts, by advancing to congratulate the Czar on his new promotion. When this ceremony was concluded, Peter ascended from the inferior office of vice-admiral to the more exalted station of sovereign, and in that character he was not afraid to pronounce a discourse before the different orders of the thronged assembly, in every respect worthy of the august name of founder and legislator of a great empire.

¹²⁷ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 377.

¹²⁸ William's Russia, p. 160.

¹²⁹ Vita de Pietro il Grande, p. 241.

“ My brothers, who among us could have entertained the proud thought that in the space of thirty years he should have one day with me constructed vessels in the Baltic ; that from this conquered country a city of the first magnitude should have started up by the union of our bravery and labours, that such a train of victorious combatants and skilful navigators should have flown from the blood of the Russians. The most prophetic eye which pervades human affairs, could not have foreseen that in so short a space of time such learned men, distinguished artists, and skilful workmen, would have flocked from the different parts of Europe to raise the arts to the most flourishing height in our country ; that we should have commanded such respect in the eyes of foreign potentates, that a glory of so vast an extent, should be attached to our nation.

“ In the instructive page of history we see that in former times the sciences fixed their abode in Greece, and that when the rage of faction urged their flight from those delightful countries, Italy was the next to feel their humanizing influence, and from thence they spread themselves into all the countries of Europe. By the negligence of our ancestors they stopped in Poland, without visiting us. But the Germans and Poles have
been

been plunged in the same darkness of ignorance where we have languished even to the present times; from the cares of their sovereigns sprang that generous emulation which now leads them to the right exercise of their faculties. To them belongs the fame of inheriting the science of Greece, its arts, and policy. At last our time is arrived, if you will second my efforts, by joining study to obedience. The arts circulate in the world as the blood in the human body, and perhaps in returning to their ancient country Greece, they may establish their empire over the sons of Russia, and our present improvements encourage me to think that nations more civilized will one day blush at the extent of our glory and labours¹³⁰. The remainder of this great day was devoted to pleasure. Erenschild was invited to the entertainment which Mentchikoff gave to his sovereign and foreign ministers, and his personal courage, skill and activity in the late action, highly commended by the Czar¹³¹.

¹³⁰ For this glorious speech, see Levesque, tom iv. p. 445, 446. Voltaire's Hist. de Russie, p. 316. Vita di Pietro il Grande, p. 237, 238. Memoirs du Minist. étranger, p. 17—19. Anecdotes Originales de Pierre le Grand, p. 269, 270. The reader will perceive we have taken the liberty of condensing the sense of some passages which are too much dilated by most of the above-quoted historians.

¹³¹ Mem. du Minist. étranger, p. 48.

But in the midst of this blaze of prosperity and renown, the traces of domestic sorrow were easy to be discovered in the face of Peter. The anxious father had long beheld his son Alexis, the sole fruit of his marriage with the divorced Eudoxia, strive with the most unnatural zeal, to unite himself in a firm league of friendship with ignorance and vice. It is not only inconsistent with our purposes, but it may be styled an useless task (since the subject has been equally exhausted by foreign and domestic writers) to enter into the history¹⁷¹⁸ of the conduct and character of a prince, whose degeneracy or guilt forced his patriotic father, four years after this honourable victory, to subscribe his sentence of death. Nor shall we so far forget the duty of an historian, as to assume the character of a political disputant, and involve ourselves in an indiscreet argument on the wise or mischievous effects of that remarkable law (published in February 1722) which abolished hereditary succession, and ordained that every future monarch should be at liberty

¹⁷¹⁸ For the life, manners, trial, and death of Alexis, see Levesque, tom. v. p. 1—66. Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 430—500.; and Coxe, vol. ii. p. 301, &c. With this last writer I must venture to differ concerning the measure of Peter's cruelty, and the real motives of his conduct. notwithstanding he has collected a strong squadron of anecdotes to support his opinions.

to constitute as successor to the throne, the person whom he should deem the most worthy, but that his choice might be revoked in case the person nominated should conduct himself in an imprudent manner¹³³. We shall only therefore endeavour to moderate the censure of posterity against both these acts, by observing that when he signed the first he was not actuated by the revengeful passions of the despot, but by the pure spirit of the legislator, who is willing to sacrifice his own happiness for the benefit of his country; whilst in the latter he wished to leave an awful warning to the children of future sovereigns, to avoid the infamous dissoluteness of an Alexis, lest it should for ever fix them in a private station.

Soon after the death of this unfortunate prince, Peter once more became the fierce and successful enemy of the Swedes. When all the vast schemes of ambition formed by Charles, were finished at the siege of Frederichshall, by a shot from the enemies' bat-

¹³³ See this extraordinary ukase in *Mem. de l'Imp. Catherine*, p. 67—72. The learned bishop Theophanes was ordered by Peter to compose a work, doubtless for the justification of this singular law, under the title of "The Right of the Monarch in the arbitrary Appointment of a Successor to the Empire." See *Tooke*, vol. ii. p. 110.

teries, or by the hands of an assassin ¹³⁴, Peter applied to the new Swedish government for the ratification of that treaty which had been projected between him and his old rival. Relying on the promised succour of England they delayed the signature of the treaty in the vain hope of reducing his demands within the compass of moderation by the perilous experiment of war. But the experience of two campaigns, in which the Russian soldiers demolished six considerable towns, and shed torrents of the noblest Swedish ¹³⁵ blood, made them at last truly desirous of cultivating peace and friendship with the Czar. On 1721. the tenth of September, a day of shame to the Swedes, and glory to the Russians, a peace was therefore signed between Frederic the successor of Charles, and Peter, which placed in the hands of the latter, at Ny-stadt in Finland, *Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria, a part of Carelia, with the territory of Vyborg, the isle of Æsel, and all the other islands in the Southern-sea and the Baltic*, that stretch from Kurland to Vyborg ¹³⁶,

¹³⁴ Some curious information is to be found in Coxe, vol. iv. p. 74. on this much agitated question concerning the manner of his death.

¹³⁵ See the horrible ravages on the Swedish coast, in Bruce, p. 199. Mottley, vol. iii. p. 188, 189. Banks, p. 320. ; and Vita di Pietro il Grande, p. 297.

¹³⁶ Tooke, vol. ii. p. 97, 98. Mottley, vol. iii. p. 260.

Thus, after a bloody and expensive war of twenty-one years, peace was finally procured by the martial vigour of Peter. In the scale of the losses and successes arising from this long and various contest, the balance might be very differently inclined by the feelings of the philosopher and statesman. Peter had repeatedly hazarded his life, the fatigues of his body had been aggravated by the cares of his mind, a great number of his subjects had been swept away by the scythe of war, and his treasury had yielded him such immense sums as was thought his estates never could have furnished with all their additional sources of opulence; but a formidable fleet remained, veteran troops, commanders of extensive abilities, and a grand consideration in the eyes of Europe. He had reduced to the lowest stage of distress, a power of great strength, and always eager to oppress Russia; he had acquired the ground for the erection of a new capital, the ports of which were formed for all the benefits of commercial intercourse; a portion of Finland, two fertile provinces, which were esteemed the nurses of Sweden, and a considerable number of skilful generals. The creed of the philosopher may refuse these advantages, as purchased at the price of the happiness and lives of millions; but in the jurisprudence of the statesman, they will be found

materially to encrease the strength and splendour of the throne.

But the purest trophy of his victories was in the new and august title of *Povclitel* or *Emperor*, and *Father of his country*, conferred on him by the gratitude of the senate and clergy, and to which they annexed the honourable title of the *Great* ¹³⁷. The ministers of England, France, Germany, Poland, and Denmark, congratulated him about the year 1722, on these glorious names ¹³⁸, which so deservedly placed him above the royal-crowd; and which the unfeigned admiration of Holland and Prussia, had bestowed on him two years after the famous battle of Pultowa.

After enjoying a short season of repose in his palace at St. Petersburg, Peter for the last
 1722. time, planted with ease, his victorious standard on the walls of Derbent ¹³⁹, a city which had beheld the wise ambition of the Mace-

¹³⁷ Mottley, vol. iii. p. 266, 277. Vita di Pietro il Grande, p. 313. Bruce says, "he took some time to consider whether he should accept of these titles." p. 227.

¹³⁸ Several historians have declared that England honoured him with this title in its European sense, after the battle of Pultowa. Among the rest, the careful Levesque has entangled himself in this error, but their fastidious refusal of this title to the year 1722, is fully exposed and authenticated by Mr. Coxe, vol. i. p. 369.

¹³⁹ See A Letter and Journal of his Imperial Majesty of Russia, from Derbent, published by Conslett, for a full account of his progress and reception at this ancient city,

donian hero, but was now to see the more unprofitable thirst of dominion in the Russian Emperor. In a manifesto ¹¹⁰, that convenient but too often deceitful organ of despotic courts, he assigned two reasons for this expedition to the south, his first was to deliver his ally the Shah of Persia (with whom he had formed a new treaty of commerce in 1715) from his internal enemies, the second, to punish those rebels who had presumed in the year 1712, to plunder and then to spill the blood of his Russian merchants at the capture of the Persian town Shamakee; but a third and more satisfactory reason might have been added, of wishing to train some of the wealthy provinces of his ally to the habits of Russian submission.

But the Ottoman court watched their growing intimacy with a jealous eye; and preparations were already forming by this power to prevent the settlement of so dangerous a neighbour, when the emperor, with a wise, but ungenerous policy, consented to sign a treaty which divided between them the largest part of that kingdom, whose monarch he had so solemnly promised to defend against his foreign and domestic foes. But the distance of Russia from her new ravished dominions, was peculiarly favourable to the spirit of re-

¹¹⁰ Tooke, vol. ii. p. 100.

volt. After lavishing much money and more men to awe the contumacious, the successors of Peter were compelled to resign all thoughts of ever considering the three provinces⁴¹ which Peter had obtained in this division of Persia, as branches of the imperial trunk. If ambition would but condescend sometimes to reckon the number of men which she so wantonly sacrifices for insecure possessions, there might be then some probability of her desires being fixed within the bounds of moderation by prudence and conscience.

It is a trite, though just observation, that a good or evil character is increased or diminished by comparison. In this light we may assert therefore, that she whom Peter raised from mistress to the rank of his wife, and then to the sovereignty of the empire, stands fairer in the page of virtue than the equal colleague of Justinian, the celebrated Theodora. Both of these remarkable women possessed the courage of thought and of action. In one part of their history there is a very striking resemblance, that both could equally boast of saving the throne of their husbands by their manly counsels. But the love of one was unbounded; the licentious pleasures of the other more select. In

⁴¹ See Levesque, tom. v. p. 124.

the beauty and wit of Theodora lurked cunning and revenge; in the smiles and vivacity of Catharine, might be read an open frankness of heart¹¹². From an innate disposition to vice the fair form of the first was prostituted to sensual commerce, the force of nature subdued the other. The shades of virtue are sometimes so closely blended as almost to become imperceptible, yet here they are visible and easy to be marked in favour of the Livonian; and though the delicacy of Peter could not flatter himself of having admitted a virgin to his royal bed, yet it could at least boast with

¹¹² There is an anecdote of Catharine related in the advertisement to Lord Whitworth's account of Russia, which strikingly displays the easy freedom and gay indifference of her character. This diplomatic lord, who was chosen to terminate the quarrel between Anne and Peter respecting the arrest of his ambassador M. de Matueof in the public street by two bailiffs, (at the suit of some tradesmen to whom he was in debt,) and in which remarkable affair the Queen of England so gloriously evinced her firmness, and the Russian monarch his moderation in submitting to the decision of an English tribunal (see the details of this curious transaction in Mottley, vol. ii. p. 50. &c. &c.) had enjoyed, in the amplest sense of the word, a personal intimacy with Catharine, when she moved in a less elevated circle. When he had compromised the rupture between the Court of England and the Emperor, he was invited to a ball at court, and selected for a partner by the Czarina. As they began the minuet, she squeezed him by the hand, and said in a whisper, "*Have you forgot little Kate?*" "This little anecdote," says the noble and celebrated Editor of the Account of Russia, Lord Orford, "I was told by the late Sir Luke Schaub, who had it from his Lordship himself."

con-

confidence of surpassing Justinian in purity of choice.

Her coronation was the last memorable act performed in the declining days of Peter. Wisely averse to squander away sums on those magnificent shews, which neither tended to increase, nor to sustain the public honour and dignity, he was however desirous in this instance, to depart from his system of œconomy, to shew the greatness of his respect
 1724. for the Czarina. The fourth of May was the day fixed for this august ceremony. The habit of Catharine was fashioned by the rich and skilful taste of Paris; while Peter, whose wardrobe was but scantily furnished, appeared in a dress which was embroidered by the hands of the Empress herself¹⁴³: the canopy, the throne, and decorations of the church, displayed the riches of the empire, and the garments of the noblemen and their consorts, invited to the feast, shone with a profusion of gold, silver, and precious stones. Peter ordered the grand marshal of the court to call the archbishops and the prelates. "Our manifesto"¹⁴⁴ has disclosed to you," said the

¹⁴³ His figure is exhibited in this full dress in the Cabinet of Sciences of St. Petersburg. See Storch's *Tableau de St. Petersburg*, p. 339; and Coxe, vol. iii. p. 187.

¹⁴⁴ This manifesto may merit insertion for the singularity of its style and subject:

"Manifest

the sovereign, "our intention of crowning our beloved spouse; it is our pleasure and command

"Manifest to the People of the Spiritual, Military, Civil, and of all other Ranks, our faithful Subjects of the whole Russian nation.

"We Peter the First, Emperor and Sovereign of all Russia, &c. &c.

"WHEREAS it is known to all, that in all Christian kingdoms it is the constant custom of potentates to crown their wives, and not only in these times, but anciently the most famous Grecian Emperors frequently did this; namely, the Emperor Basilus crowned his wife Zenobia; the Emperor Justinian, Lypitia; the Emperor Heraclius, Martinia; the Emperor Leo, the wife Maria; these all crowned their wives with the imperial diadem, and others did the same, which we think it needless on this occasion to instance it more at large.

"And whereas it is well known, during a war of twenty-one years, that we underwent the most hazardous toils, and even exposed our person to the perils of death itself for our country's good; that by God's assistance we have put an end to the war; that Russia never before had seen so honourable and advantageous a peace, and in all their affairs never had so great a glory. In which toils above written, our beloved consort, the sovereign Catharina was a great aid and support, and not only therein, but in several military expeditions, without regard to the imbecility and tenderness of her sex, resolutely of her own accord, was present with us, and gave us all possible assistance, especially in the battle with the Turks at the Pruth (where our army was only twenty-two thousand, and the Turks two hundred and seventy thousand); in that critical juncture she behaved herself not like a woman but a man, whereof our whole army will witness, and can testify to our whole empire.

"Where-

command to have the ceremony performed according to the rites of the church." After this declaration, with a dignity suitable to the solemnity of the occasion, he himself placed the crown on the head of Catharine, while six whole weeks were devoted to rejoicings⁴⁴.

Thus did the unknown captive of Marienburg, of mean extraction, of unhappy infancy, rank with the first of mankind, and receive honours from her illustrious partner, of which there is no precedent in the history of Russia. But amidst the care, jealousy, and suspicion which haunt the throne, we may vainly seek for that stranger happiness. Catharine had now reached a summit, which in the wildest dreams of ambition she could

"Wherefore by virtue of the power we have from God, to honour our consort for these her labours, with a coronation and crown, which God willing we purpose to effect at Moscow this present winter; this our intention we notify to all our faithful subjects, to favour whom, we of our imperial grace are immutably inclined.

"Given in St. Petersburg, November the 15th, 1723.

"Signed and subscribed with his Imperial Majesty's own hand, L. S. PETER.

"Printed in St. Petersburg, by the Senate, November 18, 1723."

Extracted from Consett; p. 441—444.

⁴⁴ See a full account of this coronation in Bruce, p. 351. 363; and in Mottley, vol. i. p. 151, &c.; and Mem. de Catharine, p. 76—110.

not hope to have attained, yet sorrow and vexation pressed heavily on her heart. The health of Peter daily altered, and moroseness and severity were the constant attendants of his old age. Some languish in the gloom of sorrow with a studied silence; others of a less stoic nature, seek to alleviate their pains by unburthening them in the bosom of love and friendship. Catharine, a prey to grief in the midst of all her splendour, was too deeply impressed with the beauty of her chamberlain Moens. This bold youth, joined to all the graces of a fine figure the advantages of sense and refinement. But the imprudence of the lovers soon revealed their attachment to the scrutinizing curiosity of the Count Yaguzinsky, high in the confidence of the Emperor, who flew with malicious joy to impart this discovery to his astonished master. Jealousy and revenge instantly found admittance into the breast of the Czar, but such was the grossness of his mind, that he could not be satisfied without being made a spectator of his dishonour.

The most arrogant of men can sometimes stoop to dissemble when they wish to punish. The enraged and artful monarch quitted Petersburg under pretence of removing to a villa for a few days, but privately returned to his winter palace in the capital.

From

From thence he dispatched a page upon whose diligence and fidelity he could rely, with a complimentary message to the Empress, to inform her of his arrival at Strelna, a few leagues from the residence. The return of the page, who was commanded to observe the motions of the Empress confirmed the suspicions of Peter. With all the swiftness of rage he flew to the royal chamber, and surprised the two lovers in a situation which, perhaps would have convinced the most credulous of men, that the Empress had yielded to the impulse of nature. At the hour of two this discovery was made. Madam Balke, the sister of the favourite and confident of their passion, had been posted at the entrance of her majesty's apartment to guard against untimely intrusion. The Czar in his first transports of passion, struck Catharine with his cane, and threw down a page that impeded his way. But the criminal Moens, and female attendant, were passed by with a look which threatened a more exquisite punishment.

On returning from this scene of irreparable disgrace, he ran abruptly to the adjacent chamber of Prince Repnin, who started from his bed, much alarmed by the presence of so unexpected a visitor. "Arise, and hear me," exclaimed the Emperor, in a voice

voice almost stifled between the contending passions of despair and resentment. The prince immediately obeyed his commands. A few words explained the cause of his coming, and the Czar concluded his story by assuring the prince, that when morning appeared, the head of the Empress should pay the forfeit of her guilt.

When Repnin had recovered his surprise he thus endeavoured to insinuate the counsels of moderation and prudence. "An injury has been offered to your Majesty, and the power of revenge rests in your hands. But permit me, with all the reverence which I owe to my sovereign, to present a few objections against his design. Necessity, whose dominion is absolute, compelled you to destroy the Strelitzes. In the course of your reign the scaffold has profusely teemed almost every year with the blood of your subjects. You considered that the inflexible voice of public duty sealed the fate of your son. "But if revenge prompts you to strike off the head of the Empress, all the glories of your name

¹⁴⁶ "Si vous faites encore couper la tête à votre femme, vous ternirez pour jamais votre nom et votre gloire; l'Europe vous regardera comme un Prince feroce, avide du sang de vos sujets et de vos proches." *Le Clerc*, tom. iii. p. 572. The whole of Repnin's speech is to be found in this historian.

in the judgment of Europe will be lost for ever in the ignominy of the tyrant, who thirsts for the blood of his people and kindred. Let her paramour feel his punishment in the sentence of the law. But as to the Empress, it will be most advisable to be released from her in such a manner as will not tarnish your illustrious actions."

During this discourse, delivered with such a prudent mixture of firmness and respect, the agitation of the Emperor was manifest; and after fixing his eyes attentively on the speaker for some moments, he abruptly quitted his chamber. The fall of Moens, and the punishment of his sister, were already premeditated. A special order was issued to confine the two culprits in an apartment of the winter palace, where the Czar, to indulge his revenge, suffered none to have an access to their persons, condescending himself to assume the menial office of their gaoler. A report was at the same time circulated, to throw a mist over the vulgar eye, that the enemies of the country had bribed the brother and sister to undertake the preposterous task of persuading the Empress to incline the mind of Peter against the interests of his people.

The Emperor himself interrogated his successful rival, in the presence of General Ufchakof.

Ufchakof. Without attempting any defence, he calmly pleaded guilty to the charge of corruption, doubtless happy to screen the honour of his Empress from public exposure, and, in justice to his memory we must add, expiated his crime on the scaffold with the firmness of a man. The offence of his less guilty sister, was punished with the knoot¹⁴⁷, and exile into Siberia; but from the hardships of this boundless prison, she was released by the affection and gratitude of Catharine on the death of the inexorable Peter¹⁴⁸. On the same day that the handsome Moens fell a sacrifice to his ambitious love, Peter conducted Catharine in an open carriage under the gallows to which his head was affixed. The Empress sufficiently overmastered her feelings, as to preserve an unaltered countenance at the sight of an object which must have conjured up to her mind a thousand tender remembrances; and to exclaim, "What a pity it is that such corruption should be found among courtiers!" But it is said, and the

¹⁴⁷ If the reader turns to a note in the third volume of Coxe, p. 110, he will learn the exact dimensions and weight of a knoot in that gentleman's possession, and feel the unmanly cruelty of Peter in applying it to the tender shoulders of a lady.

¹⁴⁸ Le Clerc affirms, "Depuis cette époque jusqu'à sa mort, Pierre le Grand ne parla plus à Catharine qu'en public," Tom. iii. p. 573.

character of Catharine justifies the report, that on returning to her apartments the fortitude of the heroine no longer remained, and the plenteous tears which gushed from her eyes, revealed all the soft weakness of the woman¹⁴⁹.

Among the various festivals which the superstition of Russia celebrated with particular honour, the benediction of the waters may be placed in the class of the most magnificent and solemn. On this important day, which comes in a season of the year little favourable to those who are afflicted with illness, the priests approached the river with all imaginable pomp, broke the ice, blessed the water, and baptised the infants. All the regiments

¹⁴⁹ Chantreau, vol. ii. p. 54—56. Mr. Tooke, vol. ii. p. 172—176. relates this anecdote in the same manner, and quotes as his evidence the Prince Repnin. If their reports of this mysterious affair be correct, her conduct places her on a nearer level with Theodora, whose respect for the marriage-bed was however more the effect of interest and satiety, than of virtue or gratitude. But to turn the scales of chastity in Catharine's favour, or at least to give them a more doubtful balance, we must observe, that the archbishop Theophanes (whose situation and intimacy with his sovereign enabled him to become a strong witness on this business) speaks with peculiar pleasure of the constancy of her conjugal cohabitation with Peter, and of the greatness of that virtue which preserved his affection. See Consett, p. 285. and p. 438.; assertions which I am inclined to think his manly pen never would have made for the advantage of any court faction, if he had conceived they stood in direct opposition to truth.

in the capital were drawn up in silent order on the ice. Custom prescribed the attendance of the monarch at this ancient and imposing ceremony¹³⁰. A violent cold was the consequence of Peter's visit, who already laboured under a disease, the scourge of incontinence. His pains were increased by a fever, which after ten days acquired such a fatal ascendancy over his strength, as to baffle all the efforts of medical skill. He himself felt that the hour was rapidly approaching when he must bid an everlasting farewell to that country whose fame and prosperity was the great incentive to all his labours.

His disorder at last brought on such incessant pains¹³¹, that he suffered these disconsolate words to escape his mouth; "Behold in me how far man may be entitled to the appellation of a miserable animal." After receiving the unction which the church administers to the dying, it was imagined that the following night would have released him from all his sufferings, but such was the vigour of his constitution, that he struggled

¹³⁰ For a full account of this ceremony, see Le Brun, vol. i. p. 23, 24, 25.; and Le Clerc, tom. i. p. 258. For the prayers and ceremonies used on this occasion, see King on the Greek Church, p. 386.

¹³¹ Still great and undaunted, he uttered not a sigh nor complaint to the last moment of his life. Univerf. Hist. vol. xxxv. p. 537. We fancy it would be a difficult task to discover a good authority for this assertion.

the whole day against the hand of death. The last broken words which he uttered, intimated his wish to behold the princess Anne, the issue of his second marriage, to whom he intended to dictate his last commands. When his daughter arrived¹³² he was speechless, and his left side paralysed; and in the arms of Catharine, whose real or affected love was exemplary during his illness, this extraordinary man expired at the hour of four in the morning¹³³, in the fifty-second year of his life, and in the forty-third of a most glorious and successful reign.

1725.
Jan. 28.

¹³⁴ The body of Peter was carried into the great hall of the palace, followed by all the imperial family, the senate, and a promiscuous crowd of people. The corpse of their sovereign, adorned in the vain symbols of greatness, was then deposited in the state chamber, to which all had free access, till the day of his interment, to kiss that hand which had been so long exerted in their defence. It has been maintained by some

¹³² Levesque, tom. v. p. 132—134.

¹³³ See in Confett a brief relation of the death of Peter the Great by Theophanes, p. 263. The fastidious delicacy of the Emperor deprived him of a sure and speedy relief. See *Anecdotes Originales de Pierre le Grand*, p. 274, &c.; *Mem. de Catharine*, p. 111—114.

¹³⁴ Voltaire *Hist. de Russie*, p. 451. See also the order of the funeral in Confett, p. 269.

writers, that he was poisoned by his wife and successor Catharine; but the silence of her most implacable enemies on this subject, for her greatness did not preclude their numbers, affords the most decisive proof that she did not mount the throne by an act which would have imprinted a far deeper stain on the honour of her name than that committed by her yielding tenderness¹³.

¹³ The following passage of an intelligent and impartial traveller may serve to attest the sincerity of her grief for this *national* misfortune: "Pendant l'espace d'environ six semaines que son corps fut exposé, elle ne manquoit chaque jour de visiter, avec sa famille, le tombeau de son époux, elle y pleuroit abondamment au souvenir de ce qu'elle lui devoit." See *Voyage de Moscovie par le Sieur Deschisfaux Docteur en Médecine*; à Paris 1727; p. 15.

A rapid View of the Progress of Russian Improvement under Peter the Great.

WE have now cast a circumspect look on the military and naval achievements of Peter, and before our attention is turned to the details of his private life, we shall pause to contemplate his political institutions, which imparted prosperity, and renown to his empire. That sovereign, who can voluntarily abandon the various pleasures which the scenes of luxury and peace unfold, in order to direct his whole attention to the improvement of his people, unquestionably merits their esteem and gratitude: but he whose creative genius can marshal a rude nation into order, science, and refinement, while the tempest of war incessantly roars around his dominions, (and such a glorious character was Peter,) will and deserves to outlive the former in the memory and admiration of his fellow-creatures.

The government of the Russians in all its departments had hitherto been composed for the indulgence of the passions of despotism.

The

'The Boyars, to whom were delegated the civil and military administration of affairs, and the officers who presided in the provinces, inflicted corporeal and pecuniary punishments, and were armed with the power of life and death, without being responsible to any superior jurisdiction. But Peter soon abolished the *Boyar/koidvoi*, or court of the Boyars, who left to their Czar only the shadow of power, while they engrossed its substance. For no law could be passed without the consent of these dangerous and refractory ministers. In the place of this court therefore Peter appointed an obedient senate, consisting of nine Boyars^a, and at the same time ten imperial colleges, each of which performed their respective functions without any intermixture of interests or persons. In these assemblies the wisdom of the legislature had decreed, that no determination could be given by the voice of an individual, but that the sentiments of the members should be delivered in general consultation, and the question rejected or ratified by a majority of votes.

^b To render the course of justice more simple, wise, and impartial, was worthy of the

^a Tooke, vol. ii. p. 120, 121.

^b The original number, see Perry, p. 44.

^c Strahlenberg, p. 236. Voltaire, p. 407.

character of Peter. The clearest evidence to the Czar of the rapacious and insolent oppression of the courts, was in the many severe acts and penalties which his predecessors had imposed to curb such a dangerous evil. That the true spirit of the laws might no longer be perverted by the dictates of private interest, and that poverty might assert its rights without the dread of expence, Peter prohibited the judges, under pain of death, from receiving their usual collection of fees, perquisites, and presents; and as a recompence for the loss of their profits, he gave them salaries from the public treasury suitable to their respective dignities.

In the room of those proceedings which were so grossly adapted to the wants of his subjects, he substituted a new rule of practice, which shewed him worthy of studying and adopting the institutions of more enlightened nations. It was his desire, that in the decision of the judge none should elude the efficacy of the laws from interest or prejudice; and the most remarkable proof of his wishing to preserve the seat of judgment uncorrupted, may be observed in his treatment of his favourite Mentchikoff, whose want of firmness to resist the temptations of avarice was punished with the loss of his valuable estates in
the

the Ukraine, and with a fine of two hundred thousand rubles ⁴.

Peter was first content to improve the code of laws, digested under the reign of his father; but perceiving how greatly this old system was accommodated to the spirit and views of injustice, he aspired to the more difficult and original design of building on its basis a new fabric of jurisprudence, the materials of which should be gathered from nations the most enlightened. The progress of this glorious work was urged with all the zeal and power of Peter, but it slowly proceeded in the hands of his assistants, who would perhaps have been more agreeably occupied in endeavouring to strengthen than to remove the land-marks of ancient oppression: and after the doubtful labour of five years, they at length declared their inability to accomplish his plan of founding the law on the principle of justice, unless the old basis was entirely remodelled. The disappointed Emperor, still anxious that his people should not be abused by the dark ignorance of ancient statutes, presented the tardy commissioners with copies of the Danish code ⁵, which he

⁴ See a note in the second volume of Tooke's *History of Russia*, p. 121, 122.

⁵ Tooke, vol. ii. p. 123.

instructed them to adapt to a form and meaning that might be approved by political justice. But before this shapeless mass could be moulded according to his wishes, he died, and devolved on his successors the completion of a work, which had been so worthily intended for the immediate and perpetual benefit of his subjects.

The abuses committed in the collection of revenues had long been heavily felt and lamented by the people, and now more than ever required the healing hand of reformation. By an intricate system of extortion, commenced under the secret patronage of the great Boyars, whom Peter solely employed in the management of his revenues, the whole nation was reduced to a most alarming state of distress. The price of provisions was so greatly increased by their fatal monopoly, that thousands of workmen employed at St. Petersburg daily perished, from the want of the necessary supports of life; while the coffers of the Czar were so exhausted by their fraudulent practices, as not to be able to defray the current expences of the army, much less to be provided with a sum of money for any unforeseen exigency of the state. His too frequent absence from his dominions did not permit him to discern these evils until they had attained a most dangerous height, and,

and, when beheld, the remedy was a long time delayed by his vain assurance of their integrity who superintended these concerns. The villains, to pursue whose schemes into a minute detail would be foreign to our design, were less exposed to detection from their familiar access to the person of the monarch. At last the courage of an individual, superior to the dread of their resentment, laid open their manœuvres by which the Czar and his subjects were equally despoiled. To prevent the repetition of these disorders, Peter established a chamber of justice, to which he delegated the power of trying and punishing these depredators of the public. After this discovery, a new system of finance was sketched out by the masterly and decisive hand of the Czar which effectually repaired the injuries of the old.

The imposts, after the Tatar fashion, had been formerly raised on the houses: but, as the sovereign derived a very trifling income from this mode of assessment, the superior policy of Peter obtained a more ample share of his subjects' wealth from the establishment of a poll-tax.

⁶ For the origin, growth, and termination of these extortions, see *Mem. du Minist. étrangère*, p. 75, 76, 77.

⁷ *Levesque*, tom. v. p. 91.

Peter had too deep and clear an insight into the principles of government, not to know that the sovereign who is desirous of making, preserving, or extending his conquests, must encourage the military spirit by all the arts of discipline, emulation, and reward. In the reformation of his army, the historian may be allowed equally to commend the skill of the general, the liberality of the sovereign, and the feeling of the man. Before the reign of Peter, the laurel of victory was generally snatched by fierce and disorderly attacks. It was reserved for his superior genius to disclose to the Russians the whole science of war, to shew them how to form a variety of evolutions with ease and rapidity, to rally and retire without confusion, to dread, like the ancient Romans, their commanders more than their enemies, and to construct, besiege, or defend regular batteries, entrenchments and fortifications^a. While, to render their impetuous passions tractable to these disciplined evolutions, which make the issue of battles less bloody, and to inspire them with the fondest attachment for their profession, he^b permitted the officers of

^a Strahlenberg, p. 234, 235. History of Peterburg, by a British officer, p. 3. Perry, p. 277, 278.

^b Levesque, tom. v. p. 93.

companies to assume the privileges of personal nobility, while he distinguished those who had attained the rank of staff-officer, with a perpetual title of honour.

All who were engaged in the service of the court might thus aspire, without presumption, to the rank and title of nobility; and while the civil and military character was united in Russia, the private soldier from the class of peasants, was therefore sanctioned, by frequent examples, to encourage the pleasing hope that he and his children, by their behaviour, might one day be associated to honours which would be enjoyed by their latest posterity; and small must be their number who can venture to doubt that the anticipation of these rewards did not heighten their ardour and firmness in the heat of action, and give them fresh vigour to sustain the various hardships of their campaigns. Nor shall we incur the reproach of partiality to Peter's plans for asserting, that no institution could be better adapted to rekindle that spirit of national emulation and honour, which had entirely evaporated under the long reign of ignorance and oppression.

These improvements in the army considerably tended to humanize the manners of the soldiery, and to abate that tendency to brutal cruelty which they delighted to display
over

over those whom they had vanquished. That this character of barbarous ferocity was not undeservedly attributed to the Russians by the prejudice of other nations, may be sufficiently established by one striking example. When Peter, by his indefatigable zeal and skilful measures, had reduced the people of Narva beneath the Russian yoke, his soldiers anticipated the indulgence of a general pillage and massacre. But they were disappointed by the clemency and firmness of the Czar. Followed by his generals, he galloped through the streets with his sword drawn to prevent the impending destruction. Two soldiers, more audacious than the rest, presumed to disregard his orders for sparing the inhabitants, and their property, and his sword instantly punished their disobedience by stretching them dead at his feet. He then proceeded to the hotel de ville, where the magistrates and citizens had assembled half dead with their fears. Throwing his blood-stained sword on the table, he pronounced these words of peace and safety: "Behold the weapon which has shed the blood of my soldiers, to preserve your lives."

¹⁰ Lacombe, p. 206. Voltaire's *Hist. de Russie*, p. 193. *Mem. de Minist. étrangère* p. 133. *Vita di Pietro il Grande*, p. 136. With some slight variations, this answer is also related in *Anecd. de Origin. de Pierre le Grand*, p. 32.

When

When Peter ascended the throne of his ancestors, the Russians were inferior to all other nations in naval tactics. A prince of his enlarged and speculative turn of mind, however accident may have concurred to forward his discoveries, could not be long ignorant that commerce must be strangled at her birth without the protection of a maritime power. The first fruits of his plans to aggrandize his empire were therefore visible in the formation of an admiralty and navy, which was accomplished with all that expedition which flows from the united energy of numbers, riches, and despotism; while St. Petersburg, which arose from a vast morass at his commands, soon became the residence of foreigners, who introduced among his subjects various branches of trade which before were unknown to them; and the small island of Cronstadt, which protects the face of the city, was transformed by the mandate of the sovereign, and the perseverance of the people, into an impregnable fortress, under which ships of the largest size might ride with safety against the attacks of a hostile navy. The short space of a month may convert the heavy awkwardness of the recruit into the active gracefulness of the soldier; but many years must be passed by the sailor in the school of experience, before he can be called an adept in

his adventurous service. That he might increase the gain and glory of his nation without the assistance of foreigners, he instituted a school of marine at St. Petersburg, since removed to Cronstadt, and which was entirely filled with noble youths drawn from the different parts of his vast empire, who were instructed in navigation, European languages, and in all exercises of the body, by masters of great skill and knowledge in their different professions¹¹.

Among the various reformatations effected by the enlightened mind of Peter, none serve more strongly to display his irresistible power and consummate wisdom, than his attack and demolition of the principal fortresses which sheltered the ambition, ignorance, idleness, and avarice, of the church. When the patriarch Adrian expired, it was the firm determination of the Emperor to abolish that dangerous and hateful office¹², which under aspiring prelates has frequently exposed the power of the ruler of Russia to the mortification of a competitor. But prudence re-

¹¹ Mem. de l'Empire Ruffien, p. 261, 262.

¹² Mottley, vol. i. p. 127. Perry, p. 207. Those politicians who maintain that the distance between the subject and monarch should be great in the eyes of the multitude, may not be inclined to think it was judiciously preserved to the advantage of the latter, when the Czar on foot led the ass or the horse which the patriarch rode on the procession of Palm Sunday. See Carlisle's Embassies, p. 298.

quired

quired him gradually to unfold a design, and to pronounce a decree so repugnant to the institutions and prejudices of the superstitious Russians. Fearful of avowing his sentiments until time had weakened the affection and reverence of the people to this first of spiritual dignities, he affected to ascribe the vacancy of the patriarchal chair to his warlike concerns with Sweden¹³, which prevented his attention to an affair of such solemn importance, and therefore demanding such deep consideration. At the same time he artfully nominated Stephen Tawortsky, metropolitan of Rezan, a man of learning and a foreigner, to the administration of the patriarchal functions with the title of exarch or vicegerent of the patriarchal see, whose authority however only interposed in trivial concerns; while all transactions of a superior nature were scrutinized by the sovereign, or by a general assembly of bishops¹⁴. By this specious proceeding, he had already virtually reduced the power of the ecclesiastical chief to an empty name; and after twenty years of dissimulation, which must have been extremely painful to his temper, he ventured boldly to declare that the office of patriarch should never be again

¹³ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 301. tom. v. p. 94, 95. Vita di Pietro il Grande, p. 100.

¹⁴ King, 440.

assumed in his dominions. With a wisdom guided by experience, he enjoined all subjects relative to religion to be placed under the jurisdiction of a tribunal, on which he was pleased to confer the flattering though ambiguous title of the Holy Legislative Synod.

Satisfied with real authority, Peter never courted the vain titles of greatness. He therefore scorned to proclaim himself the head of the church¹⁵, while the members of this new college so unequivocally ratified his power by their oaths and actions. In this manner did the church resign her independent jurisdiction. "I swear to be a faithful and obedient servant and subject to my true and natural sovereign, to his august successors, which he may choose to name in virtue of his incontestible authority. I acknowledge that he is the supreme judge of the spiritual college. I swear by the all-seeing God, that I understand and explain these oaths according to their strict and literal interpretation¹⁶."

¹⁵ Once however we are told, that the Czar's passion on being supplicated by the synod for a patriarch, so far provoked him to reveal his power as to say, striking his breast, "*Here is your patriarch.*" But the hasty expression of the moment, cannot be construed into a formal declaration of the throne. See Anecd. Origin. de Pierre le Grand, p. 214.

¹⁶ Voltaire's Hist. de Russie, p. 157, 158.

The sacred functions of this body were first exercised by twelve members, one president, two vice-presidents, four counsellors, and four assessors. The twelfth was charged with the care of ecclesiastical affairs at Moscow, in a particular office under the name of the synodical chancery, which depended on the synod¹⁷. But there is a wide difference to be made between the magnitude of their distinctions and prerogatives, and those enjoyed by the late patriarch. Their seat in the council was abdicated, their name in the acts of sovereignty omitted, the bulk of their revenues sequestered for royal purposes, and the seal of their subjection may be said to be fixed in the Czar's refusal for them to decide any question without its first being submitted to his approbation; while a political equality being established between the dignity of all the prelates, and the small authority which they retained being entirely broken on their expulsion or retreat from the tribunal, a frigid indifference on the part of the people, insensibly succeeded to that great awe with which they had hitherto contemplated their persons.

The sovereign whose vigour of mind can shake off the slavery of prejudice, and lessen

¹⁷ King on the Greek Church, p. 442, 443.

the strength of that odious superstition, which so often impelled the fruitful virgin to renounce the laws of nature, the sedate matron her domestic duties, and the robust youth his services to his country in the deadness of religious sanctuaries, must at least be allowed the praise of accomplishing a work of temporal if not of spiritual benefit to his deluded subjects. It was equally the aim of Peter in his ecclesiastic reformations, to dispel the dark cloud of idleness, as well as of ignorance, which hung over the numerous monasteries of Russia. He therefore commanded, that all those monks, who did not seek these vast sepulchres of the living from the love of study, and from the hopes of becoming bishops", (their general reward, as in Russia, the offices of superior clergy are filled only by the regulars,) but for the more safe indulgence of their sloth, should devote their vacant hours to the exercise of some manual labour, or useful trade, and to a strict attendance on the infirm of every class, who were distributed among the monasteries. Nor did the secret relaxations of discipline, practised by the female exiles of society, escape his reforming notice. The nuns were no longer

" For a full account of the ecclesiastical improvements of Peter, see King on the Greek Church, p. 427—477. and Consett, p. 129—184.

suffered,

suffered, by the inflexible Emperor¹⁹, to disregard the public welfare, when they assumed their sacred character, but were ordered to superintend the education of orphans and poor girls, and to support with a cheerful hand, the aged, the lame, the sick, and distressed of their own sex.

Uncontaminated by that false and servile piety, which so debased the hearts, and weakened the faculties of his people, he softened the rigid observance of their numerous fasts, particularly of the four great Lents²⁰, an ancient imposition of the Greek church, and as prejudicial to the labourers, and to soldiers, as that ancient law of the Jews, which made it unlawful for them to shed the blood of their enemies on the sabbath²¹, even if their patient doctrine should endanger the lives and independence of their whole nation. He also dispensed with the abstinence of fish days; the almoners of the ships and regiments were commanded to shew the first example of obedience to his orders; and we believe it

¹⁹ In this survey of Peter's improvements, and in the details of his private life, I indifferently use the names of Czar or Emperor.

²⁰ See *Le Chevalier Goudar*, p. 110. They still however outstrip in number those which are observed by the weakness or piety of the apostolic see. Vide *Busching's Geogr.* tom. i. part 2. *Introd. à l'Empire Russe*.

²¹ See *Flav. Josephus de Bello Judaico*. Bas. 1540, lib. iv. cap. iv.

was given without the smallest symptoms of "reluctance. His soldiers were not permitted to retire to a convent without an express order from himself or his Synod. Nor after his divorce was the husband licensed by his wife regulations, to bury himself in that abode of superstition, unless his wife was a voluntary proselyte to the monastic profession, and no children remained to lament their infatuation. Whoever was employed in the public service, must obtain a special permission before the gates of the monastery could be thrown open for his seclusion. The nuns were not suffered to converse with strangers except in their monasteries. Like the deaconesses of the primitive church, they did not receive the tonsure until fifty or sixty. But before this last ceremony was performed, which for ever excluded them from all social intercourse with their fellow-creatures, if the voice of nature urged them to assume the more suitable character of wives, they were not only allowed by the Czar to listen, but exhorted to obey her unerring summons. "An admirable regulation," exclaims the philosophic Voltaire, "in a country where population is far more necessary than monasteries."

²² Voltaire's *Hist. de Russie*, p. 159, 160.

It was a wise maxim of ancient jurisprudence that all whom the state protected, should contribute according to their respective abilities to its benefit. Peter seems not to have been insensible to the justice of this policy, when he ordered those unhappy females, who, in the darkness of ignorance and credulity of superstition, had devoted themselves to a perpetual vow of chastity, (when the Almighty intended them to have fulfilled the duties of mothers,) to render themselves useful to the public by some employment²³ adapted to their sex. The name of the Empress Catharine may be here introduced as carrying this beneficial command into execution. By a liberal maintenance, she collected a sufficient number of workwomen from Holland and Brabant. These artificers were distributed by the Empress in the several monasteries, and their pupils soon acquired such skill in many of the useful arts of life, that their productions frequently contributed to ornament the person of Catharine and the ladies of her court.

The intolerant orthodoxy of his predecessors had always made them the persecutors of those who did not join in the worship of the Greek church. Ignorant that such oppression

²³ King, p. 458. Voltaire's Hist. de Russie, p. 414.

only

only more widely separated them from those nations, whose institutions, arts, sciences, and policy, they wished to study and adopt. The more piercing eye of Peter had discerned, that to disarm the prejudices of his people, and to civilize their manners, he must introduce into his empire the mild laws of toleration²⁴. He not only therefore erected the standard of religious freedom in his dominions, but even suffered to the great offence of the clergy, his subjects, of both sexes, to mingle their blood with heretical blood, in marriage. And this generous policy was in the end, rewarded by a numerous increase of enlightened

²⁴ His aversion and expulsion of the Jesuits originated from political safety, and therefore cannot be recited to refute the truth of our assertion. See Bruce's Mem. p. 200. But the impartiality of history must observe that the Rascolnicks or Separatists who adhere to the old fashion of cultivating the growth of their beards, were for a long time persecuted and deprived of the benefit of this honourable edict. But the dagger which one of them attempted to plunge in his breast, may form perhaps a satisfactory apology for his rigour and animosity. Their misfortunes however at last excited his compassion. The same indulgence was granted to the exercise of their religious faith, on the equitable condition, that they should never employ their time in the acquisition of proselytes. And Peter had no occasion to repent his generosity; for their blind and abject superstition never impeached their honesty, their industry, and obedience to the government. For the intended assassination of Peter by one of these Separatists, see *Anec. Orig. de Pierre le Grand*, p. 116, &c. For their calamities, peaceable conduct, and integrity of dealing, *Mem. de l'Empire Ruffien*, p. 142.

strangers.

strangers. Regulations like these which bore such evident marks of good sense, and therefore so obnoxious to the malignant spirit of fanaticism, gave a new wound to the already broken strength of the church. Rallying however once more round the throne of superstition, they armed themselves with the texts of the bible, and boldly hurled against him the dread name of *Antichrist*.

But the Emperor was too deeply versed in the human character not to be sensible that the dignity of the sovereign is weakened when he descends into a peevish and angry disputant with a faction; more wisely therefore he answered their scriptural quotations by a command for the bible to be translated and printed into the Slavonic language. The progress of this holy labour was yet so much impeded by the clergy, that he only lived to have the satisfaction of perusing the New Testament²⁵ in a language that his people might understand what they were taught to believe. From the crowd however of religious assailants, who, inflamed by the united zeal of superstition and revenge, studiously laboured to pull down the glorious fabric of reformation erecting by their sage monarch,

²⁵ Tooke, vol ii. p. 133, 134. Mottley relates that the Bible was printed at Amsterdam; but Consett corrects this mistake in his preface.

we must distinguish the name of Theophanes²⁶ the learned archbishop of Novgorod, whose monkish prejudices being washed away in the streams of foreign association, and mind liberalized by study and experience, was proud to be the assistant of his prince, in scattering the seeds of knowledge over his barren land. Against the loud din of faction and hatred the plans of Peter, by this prelate's great exertions, imperceptibly succeeded. Stripped of the most ample portion of their riches by the irresistible demand of public necessity, compelled to labour for their maintenance, familiarly contemplated by the multitude, the votaries of superstition gradually disappeared, while the principles of humanity and reason were introduced, which taught them to imbibe a more genuine spirit of christianity.

The commercial spirit of the Russians, and the many and great advantages which his extensive territories presented both for foreign and domestic trade, were powerful incentives to Peter to promote a regular intercourse with distant nations. And perhaps it would be no deviation from the strict line of truth to declare, that the revolution in commerce, effected by the force and enthu-

²⁶ His character, and labours, are to be seen in King, p. 441, 442.

fiasm of his genius, might be almost paralleled with that revolution, produced by the rapid success of his arms. Under the active reign of his father Alexis, Astrakan had become the centre of the Persian trade ; to which place merchants from Bucharra, Crim Tatar, Armenia, Persia, and even India resorted²⁷.

But the rebellion²⁸ of the famous rebel Stenka Razin, utterly destroyed this important and profitable branch of foreign trade ; while his intercourse with China was interrupted by the unwise obstinacy of national pride. The greater resources of Peter by land and by sea, soon removed all impediments to the prosecution of a beneficial trade over the Caspian Sea. Nor was he insensible to the lasting and inestimable benefit which might accrue to his country from renewing its connection with China. These two mighty empires mutually possessing those natural products which the other wanted, and only separated from each other by the narrow conflux of the Kama, pleased themselves with the happy prospect of rivetting the bonds of friendship and commerce, at the peace concluded in 1698. The foundations²⁹ of this trade were laid in 1653,

²⁷ Coxe, vol. iii. p. 321.

²⁸ See his exploits. Razin in the reign of Alexis, and in the fourth tome of Levesque.

²⁹ *Essai sur le Commerce de Russie*, p. 67—71.

by some companies of Russians and Bucharians established in Siberia. A grand caravan of these merchants set forth from Tobolsk, in 1670, and arrived at Peking through the country of the Calmucks. The labour and risk of their journey were rewarded with considerable profits. But their prosperity was interrupted in 1684 by the hostilities of the Chinese and Russians on the river Amur; the peace of 1691, fixed, for a time, the limits of the two empires; and in 1698 a fresh arrangement was made between Russia and China, which greatly increased the royal treasury.

Prince Gangarin, then governor of Siberia, exercised such an odious rapine on the caravans which he was bound to protect from every tie of loyalty and gratitude to the Czar, as was highly unpropitious to their growing intercourse. But after his ambition and avarice had conducted him to the scaffold³⁰, the commerce of the caravans was carried on for the space of twenty years with extraordinary vigour and success. This harmony between the two nations was at last broken by the disorderly conduct of the Russians at Peking; and the Chinese threatened to exclude the

³⁰ See the history of this singular personage in Strahlenberg, p. 261—265.

Russians from all commerce with them. Peter, to prevent this threat being put into execution, dispatched Ismailof, the captain of his guards in 1719, to the Chinese court. But the loose and impolitic behaviour of the Russians destroyed the advantages which might have been obtained from their embassy. The Emperor Kamhi expressed his indignation, and satisfied his revenge, by expelling them from China. Five years after this event his son and successor Yontchin, whose wisdom equalled, and firmness surpassed, his father in removing the Jesuits from his dominions, concluded a treaty by which the Russian caravans were to advance no farther than the frontiers, for the exchange of their various productions. These regulations deadened for a time the activity of their intercourse, but under the second Catharine who followed the footsteps of Peter with equal glory and perhaps greater discretion, their correspondence became more than ever a profitable object of attention³¹. In speaking of Peter's commercial pursuits, it may be proper to mention in this place, that his possession of that vast peninsula of Kamtschatka, and of

³¹ A writer of great information on this subject, estimates the gross amount of the average trade to China, in exports and imports, nearly to reach the large sum of 800,000*l.* sterling. Coxe, vol. iii. p. 336. Another writer at Chantreau, 4,000,000 of roubles, vol. i. p. 203.

the Kurilly islands³², where nature appears in her most wild and uncultivated form, still added to widen the circulation of Russian traffic.

But when the Emperor had humbled the proud Swede, and became master of the Baltic, he then with some reason might indulge his fancy in opening more unbounded views, and in suggesting several important schemes, for a solid establishment of commerce with Europe. To realize these prospects of a mind which loved to be engaged in grand undertakings, St. Petersburg appeared, which soon became, from his well-digested measures, rather than advantageous position, the centre of commerce, as well as the seat of dominion. Yet the ambition of this great man did not rest satisfied with seeing the ships of England, Holland, and France, annually unload their rich cargoes in the harbour of his new erected city; he sought even to find by discoveries, a new quarter in the regions of Asia, which might pour into his empire some part of the great wealth of the western world, and he even drew up instructions with his own hand, for carrying this plan into execution³³.

³² See Tooke's View of the Russian Empire, vol. ii. p. 107.

³³ See Muller's Voyages et Decouvertes faites par les Russes, Amst. 1766, tom. i. p. 4, 5—141.

Peter likewise sought to improve the inland trade of Russia by the conveniency of spacious canals and roads; the establishments of equal weights and measures, the reform of the mint and erection of a board of commerce. The Emperor by his patrimony, ruled over a portion of the banks of the Caspian Sea, and by his conquests he stretched his dominion to the Ladoga, the Lake Peypus, and the Gulf of Finland²⁶. But his new seat of government, chosen with such admirable judgment to render Russia a preponderating power in the balance of Europe, and likewise a maritime power which might employ its forces in the Baltic and in those seas which nature had placed for its accommodation, was still unfurnished with the means of receiving into her bosom the valuable productions of Persia by a navigable communication, and thus of corresponding at once with Asia and with Europe.

A merchant whose name was Serdioukof, conversant with the spirit of his prince, and ambitious and capable of distinguishing himself in the public service, presented a plan to Peter which embraced this great object. The deep and majestic Neva, along whose broad streams now float the inexhaustible commo-

²⁶ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 325. and tom. iv. p. 99.

dities and luxuries of the most distant countries, into the two superb quays of St. Petersburg, facilitated the entrance of the ships into the lake Ladoga. From thence they might ascend the Volkhof, traverse the lake Ilmen, and penetrate into the Msta, which empties its waters into that lake. This river, towards its source, exceeds not in distance three miles from the Tver, or Tvertza, which loses itself in the Volga, from whence they might open an entrance into the Caspian Sea. To effect an union between this sea and the Baltic, it required human industry to supply the deficiencies of nature by the construction of a new canal the celebrated *Višnenĭ Voloshok*²⁵, which should convey the waters of the Msta to the Tver. Such was the bold design of Serdioukof; and from the zeal of his sovereign, and from the indefatigable exertions of his people he beheld its execution.

But the Emperor did not gain the advantages he expected from these alterations. The sudden and violent tempests which so frequently happened in the lake Ladoga, presenting so many²⁶ shoals, proved the scene of annual destruction to several of his ships: in his anxiety therefore to preserve the lives of

²⁵ See a minute description of this great canal in Coxe, vol. iii. p. 369.

²⁶ Strahlenberg, note, p. 183.

his subjects and their commerce, he formed the project of digging a new canal to unite the streams of the Volkhof and the Neva. This useful work was suspended by his death: It was however resumed by his successor, and accomplished by the prince of the same name, but of very different character and fortune.

The Emperor also directed several dry docks to be formed at Cronstadt, for the greater conveniency of repairing his fleet. Ever desirous of giving the greatest encouragement to the commercial pursuits of his nation, he conceived the plan of uniting the Don with the Volga, and thus to have opened an intercourse between the Euxine, the Caspian, and the Baltic³⁷. But this work, which so truly marks the stamp of his genius, he left incomplete; and it still remains for an Alexander to finish this serviceable monument of Russian magnificence.

In our admiration of those monarchs who have conduced to the glory or splendour of their country, by the accomplishment of any work that might deserve the thanks of his people, or the investigation of foreigners, we

³⁷ Coxe, vol. iii. p. 375. In the following page however, this writer observes, that the advantages resulting from the projected canal, would be scarcely equivalent to the expence of forming it.

are too often apt to assign all the praise to them, unjustly forgetful how much of the design, and how all the burthen of the undertaking are committed to the subject. But from this observation Peter stands peculiarly exempt; to execute his arduous designs, a greater task was devolved on his hands than the signature of patents, and the nomination of inspectors; imperious necessity obliged him to throw aside the idle state of the Emperor, and to assume the active character of the artificer as well as projector of most of those works which so much contributed to the national honour and benefit. When, to facilitate the communication of commerce, he proposed the construction of canals, which were dug with so much danger from the noxious swampiness of the soil, he frequently appeared at the head of the workmen, and raked up the earth himself, that they might be animated by his example, to surmount the most discouraging hardships. In connecting the Neva with the Volkhof, he levelled the ground himself²⁸, and his successors still preserve, with the fondest remembrance of his virtues, the royal pick-axe and shovel which were used to surmount the ineffectual barriers of nature.

²⁸ Voltaire de Russie, p. 397, &c.

It was a wise policy of the Romans, never to reckon a country completely subdued, until it was laid open on all sides to their troops and commands. On the same principle it may be considered, that the commercial prosperity of a kingdom can never be very great, until the intercourse of its capital with the distant provinces is rendered practicable and easy by the goodness of the roads. In the construction of new and reparation of old roads, Peter displayed his accustomed zeal for the public benefit.

The route from Moscow to St. Petersburg, but which cannot be commended for its diversified scenery, as it is continued in a straight line during a space of five hundred miles, chiefly through immense tracts of woods, remains a laudable proof of his attention to the convenience of his people. An English mathematician, of the name of Ferguson, is entitled to the praise of submitting this design to the Emperor, which, when carried into execution, shortened the journey thirty miles²⁹.

The critical affairs of the Emperor so often requiring the swiftest intelligence, and his commands to be executed with the utmost dispatch, soon revealed to him the manifold

²⁹ Mem. de l'Empire Ruffien, p. 164.; Perry, p. 280.; Strahlenberg, p. 230.

advantages attending the institution of regular posts through the principal towns of his extensive dominions.

Before this necessary establishment, the mode of communication was characteristic of the small improvement of the Russians in the conveniences of civilized life. Two distant friends were obliged to commit their correspondence to a messenger, whose fidelity was more often precarious than his demands moderate. Travellers could not arrive at the place of their destination except in their own carriages and sledges, while they were to look for horses in the accommodation of the boors, whose extortions were unbounded, because their prices were unfixed by the government.

* To remedy these defects, the Emperor established from Moscow to St. Petersburg eighty relays, or *gamas*, as they term these places where the sledges stopped. These houses were distant from each other only five or six miles: each was constantly provided with twenty-four post horses, maintained at the expence of those peasants who were nominated by government for this service.

* Mem. de l'Empire Rusien, p. 161, 162. If we attend to the loud complaints of foreigners, we shall find that an improvement in the post-horses and roads are still two things much to be desired in Russia.

The Czar obliged these *yamshiks* (so they are called by the natives) to serve travellers at a reasonable price; and as they were strictly prohibited from every other employment, his equity exempted them from the payment of the poll-tax. Careful that no impediment which he could remedy, should check the vigour with which his subjects applied themselves to the extension of their foreign and domestic trade, the Emperor established a packet " from St. Petersburg to the commercial town of Lubec. Inimitable prince, whose various force of genius could, with equal ability and ease, suggest and execute the most enlarged as well as the most insignificant plans of civil policy ".

His next regulation was no longer to suffer industry to be robbed of its just wages by the partial justice of weights and measures ". To prevent that illicit exaction, which is so threatening to the very vitals of commerce, he established an uniformity of weights and measures throughout the empire, while the

⁴¹ Tooke, vol. ii. p. 146.

⁴² " Quoique les hommes se flattent de leur grandes actions," says the philosophic Rochefoucauld, elles ne sont pas souvent les effets d'un grand dessein, mais les effets du hazard." See his celebrated *Pensées Maximes et Reflexions Morales*, p. 5. But to no prince perhaps can this observation be less appropriate than to Peter.

⁴³ Voltaire Hist. de Russie, p. 393.

prices of the common necessaries of life were equitably settled. He also greatly improved the current coin of the state, by appointing some Frenchmen, to superintend the hitherto impure operations of the mint⁴⁴; another circumstance which added to the encouragement of commerce.

Universal experience proved to Peter, that, unless the rights of foreigners were deliberately weighed in the scales of justice, he could never expect to behold his empire civilized or enriched by commerce. That oracle of wisdom, experience, had held up her lamp for him to read and to mark, in the code of his father, how much the integrity of the judge was biassed by national affection, and consequently how much the impartiality of the law was violated, when he was called upon to decide between the claims of a foreigner and a native. To reform the pernicious abuses which must naturally have arisen from so venal an administration of justice, he erected a tribunal of commerce, whose equity it was almost impossible to distrust, by having most judiciously filled it

⁴⁴ Tooke, vol. ii. p. 147. Those readers who may wish to obtain a clear insight into the history of Russian coinage, and into the difference of the present money in former reigns, we refer to M. Marbault, *Essai sur le Commerce de Russie*, p. 254, &c.

with

with an equal number of natives and foreigners". By this proceeding he may be said to have fixed the last key-stone to the centre arch of commerce.

The Czar, in applying himself, on his travels, with his usual inquisitiveness, to discover the various motives of human actions, had observed with surprise the emulation which sovereigns drew from their subjects, by distributing personal marks of honour, unmeaning decorations in appearance, but which the proudest nobles solicited with eagerness, as the most splendid rewards of their loyalty and valour. To imitate a policy so little expensive to the monarch, but which so forcibly conspired to animate men with a just feeling of courage and honour, he instituted the order of St. Andrew, and ornamented the heroes of Azof with this flattering distinction. "The prince Golovin was the first knight of this most illustrious order; and the melancholy task was soon after imposed on Peter of investing this companion of his travels with the great employments of

⁴⁵ Levesque, tom. v. p. 94. Voltaire Hist. de Russie, p. 395.

⁴⁶ Levesque, tom. iv. p. 281. Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 172. Voltaire Hist. de Russie, p. 163. Both Mottley, vol. i. p. 118. and Banks, p. 115. greatly err when they so positively affirm that Mentchikoff was the first person who received this honourable badge of royal favour.

the

the celebrated Lefort, with whom he had ever been connected by all the tender ties of fraternal affection, and whose premature death he more honoured by his tears of gratitude than magnificent obsequies⁴⁷.

In the bold system of policy which Peter pursued, a profound and invariable respect to the laws and customs of Europe might be characterized as its most distinguishing feature. Sensible that the prejudices of his subjects had much contributed to check their improvements, by secluding them from the commerce of mankind, in order to wean them from an error the consequences of which were so obvious, he commanded all his subjects, the clergy, boors, Tatars, Calmucks, and tribes of their different class excepted⁴⁸, to relinquish their beards, and to assume the European habit. They had however too much obstinacy to abandon the one, and too much superstition to adopt the other without the interposition of force. But the lovers of ancient custom, and especially the Razkolniks, or Separatists, whose fears construed this change of their habits into the profanation of their religion, were permitted to indulge their

⁴⁷ See a circumstantial account of his funeral in Mottley, vol. i. p. 116, 117.

⁴⁸ Tooke, vol. ii. p. 152. Gordon, vol. i. p. 141. only allows the Cossacks, Tatars, and Calmucks to be exempted.

fondness

fondness for their beards, on the payment of an annual tax of an hundred roubles. Drunkenness however, a vice in which the highest and lowest Russian could contest an equal share of perfection, greatly befriended this regulation, from oftentimes exposing the old Boyars in the royal entertainments to the malice of the professors of the new fashion, who shaped their beards in a form so truly ridiculous, that they were obliged to keep their chambers for several months, or lose for ever these appendages to the majesty of their person.

But the most numerous though unwilling proselytes of this new fashion were procured by the decisive arm of force. In the open streets, it robbed them of these beloved emblems of their bravery and manhood⁴⁹, and then provokingly attributed the commission of such a deep injury to the sportive playfulness of a jest. A similar union of force and artifice was necessary for the introduction

⁴⁹ Smith, the author of *Carlisle's Embassies*, p. 39. informs us, that he who had the greatest beard was esteemed the bravest man among the Russians; perhaps this folly may be nearly equalled by the Persians, who exalted a drunkard to the highest rank of courage and honour. See *Plutarch's Sympos.* Franc. 1599, lib. i. quæst. iv. for a curious anecdote of Cyrus the younger soliciting Lacedæmonian aid against his brother Artaxerxes, and claiming it chiefly on account of his capacity to bear a greater quantity of liquor than any of his equals.

of the new dress, the model of which was hung on the gates of every city for the inspection of all classes of people. The friends of reason and of the Czar smiled at these reforming scenes, but rage was in the heart of the people, while compliance was on their lips; and the stain of blood frequently betrayed the deepness of their hatred to these innovations.

His next alteration calls loudly for our praise, as it bears the indelible stamp of humanity and justice. The obligations of the Russian women are boundless to Peter, who reformed that tyranny which had fixed them in a condition so humiliating. His manly soul had long sympathized with their heavy matrimonial grievances. With a boldness therefore, well worthy of so good a cause, he soon changed these slaves into the equal partners of their lords.

No longer immersed in sequestered apartments, or deprived of company and acquaintance by their masters, the generous policy of Peter called the Russian women to assemblies, which were established to encourage the growth of social intercourse; and still more to enlarge their minds by the contemplation of polished scenes, he commanded them to accompany their husbands in their travels".

" Mottley, vol. ii. p. 219.

But to crown the happiness of the female sex, he imparted to them the freedom of choice, and the permission of observing the vices and virtues of men, before the conjugal bond became indissoluble¹¹; for, without that right, the first and most tender of all human ties can only be compared to a pecuniary bargain.

In the entertainments which Peter directed to be successively given at the houses of his noblemen, the gratitude of the ladies cheerfully conformed to the edict of their royal benefactor, who required of them alternately to appear in the English, French, and German habit. Yet the great reformer, in those whirlwinds of passion which occasionally effaced his reason, could not always preserve the remembrance of that decency or politeness which he so scrupulously exacted from others. In one of these new established parties of pleasure, the Emperor struck Mentchikoff, because this favourite had forgotten to lay aside his sword during the dance¹².

¹¹ Vita Pietro il Grande, p. 104, 105.; Theophanes apud Consett, p. 305.; Mottley, vol. i. p. 169. 174.; Gordon, vol. i. p. 142.; Banks, p. 107—110; Perry, 195—202.; Voltaire Hist. de Russie, p. 161, 162.; Mem. du Regne de Pierre le Grand, tom. ii. p. 246. 252.

¹² Levesque, tom. iv. p. 283, 284.

In this honourable and laborious struggle of Peter to compel his ignorant and obstinate people to pay a just deference to the superior wisdom and enlightened institutions of European nations, he beheld them, with no small uneasiness, still adopting the Greek mode of computing the creation of the world from the first of September. In 1700, he abolished this usage, and commanded the first year of the century to be commenced with the month of January, to the great scandal and astonishment of the superstitious Russians. This order was published in the courts of justice, the pulpits, and public places of the several towns of the empire, while great solemnities ushered in this useful reformation". And we also read with satisfaction, that about this time, his real or affected love for a more free spirit of national allegiance suppressed the degrading word *kalop*, or *slave*, and enjoined his Russians to assume the more honourable ap-

³³ Mottley, vol. i. p. 137, 138.; Tooke, vol. ii. p. 148, 149.; Perry, p. 235, 236.; Banks, p. 112.—In this alteration, however, he did not adopt the Gregorian but the old Julian calendar, which is still respected in Russia. Hence the date is sometimes doubly expressed; as, on the 1st of May, Peter cast the foundation of St. Petersburg. See likewise a curious and learned note of Mr. Gibbon, vol. vii. p. 154. on this subject; but the objections of this renowned historian to the modern method of counting are not, in my opinion, marked with his usual discernment.

pellation

pellation of *raab*, or *subject*, when they presented their requests to him ²⁴.

A sovereign, ardent and successful in his attempts, like Peter, to destroy that barbarism which had so long and deeply oppressed Russia, could not neglect to seize the first favourable opportunity of introducing the growth of manufactures, the immediate parents of civilization. As the Russians were so often summoned to the field, it was the first care of Peter to improve and multiply the fabrication of arms. Numerous forges were built in the vicinity of St. Petersburg; and such was the incessant activity of the Czar, that amidst the multitude of important concerns over which he was compelled to extend his personal inspection, he still found time to urge the toils of his workmen by his presence and example. The precious iron was extracted from the mines of Olonetz, and those implements of destruction, artillery, bombs, and balls, were so well manufactured for the purposes of war, by the skill of foreign masters, and the industry of the Russian apprentices, that well-grounded hopes might be entertained by Peter, says a foreign minister of the time, of soon rendering these articles a valuable commodity in the branch of exportation with the neighbouring nations. A portion of his

²⁴ Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 175. Perry, p. 237.

attention was also bestowed on those forges where anchors were wrought, and all the necessary iron for the composition of a ship. Nor did he conceive the royal dignity to be degraded by the exercise of manual labour at the lime and tile-kilns, which were to afford an inexhaustible stock of materials to his projected capital. By his express order, a particular place of St. Petersburg was assigned for the reception of those workmen who afforded to his increasing navy an adequate quantity of ropes, sails, and cables. Under his provident care, a sufficient number of water mills were erected on the Neva, near the memorable village of Schlusfelburg, where the grain was speedily prepared for use by the improvements of human art.

Ever desirous of opening new sources of wealth and industry to his country, he issued instructions to explore the mines of Siberia ; and, in order that this new undertaking might be carried on in a proper manner, he instituted a college of mines, to which he gave regulations highly productive to the interests of commerce.

Sensible also that his country could not be esteemed independent of other nations until she had possessed their arts, he procured several skilful husbandmen from Silesia to teach the inhabitants of Kazan the method of prepar-

preparing the wool of their sheep for the manufactures, as he had long seen with a deep concern the wealth of his empire continually drained by the artificers of England, who clothed the greatest part of his regular troops: With the same intention, to prevent the riches of his empire being unprofitably dispersed to foreign nations, he introduced linen, woollen, and silken manufactories, in which the successive operations of spinning, weaving, and dying, were chiefly performed by the hand of the Dutch, German, and French people. In studying the characters of princes who have inscribed their actions on the scroll of fame, we may observe, that few or none of them possessed that wonderful versatility of mind which could fly to the most opposite subjects with a promptitude and ability which would lead the reader to imagine, that his whole attention had been devoted to the business in which he was then engaged.

Before this ornament of Russia had ascended the throne, to dedicate his life to the service of his country, the arts and sciences were in the darkest state³³. He aspired to the sublime

³³ That enlightened assistant of Peter's labours, the celebrated Theophanes, in pointing out the various merits of his deceased friend and master, and the wretched ignorance of Russia till he ascended the throne, says that, before his

the advantages of knowledge to his people. He enjoined the members of this institution to devote an ample portion of their time to the composition of elementary books on the sciences⁶⁰, and when they were done, to render them familiar to the understanding of all, by the simple dress of a translation.

The science of astronomy, which leads the mind of man to the most sublime conceptions of the omnipotence of his Maker, and teaches him to survey with a philosophic eye the comparative insignificance of human grandeur, Peter had cultivated with no inconsiderable success. In the observatory of Paris, he had first been seized with the desire of obtaining a knowledge of the planetary system, and on his return he more strikingly evinced his love of astronomy, by erecting an observatory⁶¹, which was furnished by him with the most valuable instruments of observation. The Czar, whose passion for any science was always remotely or intimately connected with his views for the improvement of his nation,

⁶⁰ Tooke, vol. ii. p. 136. See likewise *Anecdotes. Origine de Pierre le Grand.* p. 265.

⁶¹ *Œuvres de Fontenelle. Eloge du Czar Pierre I.* p. 219. Tooke, vol. ii. p. 137. Astronomy, before the enlightened measures of Peter aroused the mental emulation of the young and old in Russia, was interpreted by their ignorant fears into witchcraft. See Strahlenberg, p. 235.; and Mottley, vol. i. p. 138.

to direct the minds of the great personages of his court to the labour of thought, and to make their taste in some degree congenial with his own, used frequently to converse with them on the study of astronomy, and to explain to their perplexed comprehensions how the sun is surrounded by a host of planetary worlds, which revolve around his attractive influence. In this manner did their philosophic Emperor pour into their minds the light of science, which by degrees accustomed them to pursuits that pressed the flight of ignorance, and gave a lasting strength to the efforts of literary commerce. The astronomical abilities of the Czar likewise enabled him boldly to put the axe to the very root of the tree of superstition, which had so long overshadowed Russia, by proclaiming to his people the precise day of an eclipse of the sun, in order that their credulous imaginations might cease to interpret this simple and necessary movement of the earth into a portentous messenger of an avenging deity.

Peter had gratefully reflected how much the fund of his own information was enriched by his personal intercourse with distant nations: anxious therefore to see the rising generation disentangled from the net of ancient prejudices, he assigned an adequate stipend to a number of youths, for the express

purpose of enabling them to pursue their studies in those countries where the arts and sciences flourished in the greatest perfection.

To awaken them to the most assiduous diligence, this judge as well as patron of intellectual labours promised to make, as every sovereign should do who seeks the pure applause of posterity, the road of learning communicate with the seat of preferment. The fruits derived from this laudable plan, were sometimes of an unpromising⁶², but more often of the most substantial kind. On their return, the Emperor himself scrutinized their several merits, and if their progress satisfied his expectations, they were deservedly, though gradually, advanced to offices of trust and dignity. But the youth who had wantonly abused this fair occasion of improvement was fixed, by the just displeasure of his royal examiner, in a situation which could neither be reckoned great or lucrative. While the strong desire of the Czar to enlighten the

⁶² Hear the curious words of Lacombe : " Un d'eux, plus Moïcovite que les autres, s'obstina de rester enfermé dans une chambre à Venise, *pendant quatre années* ; et de retour dans son pays, il se fit mérite de n'avoir rien vu, ni rien appris dans une ville, l'école de la Politique, du Commerce, et des Beaux Arts ;" p. 153. See likewise Fontenelle's Eloge due Czar Pierre I. p. 195. I have seen this singular fact elsewhere authenticated, but the place this son of ignorance chose for his long seclusion is not recorded.

lower classes of society, and to give them a more civilized character, is strikingly testified by his establishment of schools throughout the towns and villages of his immense empire⁶³; where the children of the peasants might be instructed in reading and writing. But, perhaps, to have effectually called forth the dormant vigour of their minds, he should have levelled every barrier of domestic slavery which appeared on the face of his country.

To impart a relish for rational pleasures among his subjects, the Czar opened a national theatre at Moscow⁶⁴: but the reader will easily conceive, from the barbarous character of the Russians, that with all his labours he never could boast of having formed it into a school of correct taste, or of pleasing instruction. The princess Natalia, sister to the Emperor, was a great encourager of the theatrical art; and from her attachment to the scenic muses, she composed many tragedies and comedies⁶⁵, which though now thrown
on

⁶³ Banks, p. 345.

⁶⁴ Tooke, vol. ii. p. 153.

⁶⁵ Mem. de l'Empire Rusien, p. 272.—But the merit of striking out this new path of taste is due to the elegant genius of the unfortunate Sophia, who in the barbarism of the times, and in the midst of the various difficulties of her great station, diverted her mind by the translation of the inimitable Moliere's "Medecin malgré lui" into her native

on the shelf of oblivion were then esteemed both popular and interesting.

In the midst of the multiplicity of affairs which engaged his attention, Peter did not neglect the institution of a police at St. Petersburg, which cast a vigilant eye over the internal security of Russia. A most inexorable enemy to gaming, which banishes from the heart of man every desire of excellence save that detestable one of surpassing his antagonist in fraudulent dexterity, he guarded its exclusions by regulations of seasonable vigour; nor was an ukase wanting to confine the luxury of dress within the bounds of decent moderation⁶⁶: while⁶⁷ his foundation and endowment of two hospitals at St. Petersburg, for the reception of superannuated or infirm soldiers and sailors, and erection of a foundling house, a college of physicians, and of a grand dispensary, which supplied with medicines his army and all the great cities⁶⁸, are wise and benevolent acts which cannot fail to receive just applause from the virtue and compassion of the present age.

tongue, in which she performed one of the characters; and by the composition of a tragedy, probably, says Mr. Cox, the first extant in the Russian language, vol. ii. p. 49.

⁶⁶ Strahlenberg, p. 237.

⁶⁷ Anecdotes Origin. de Pierre le Grand, p. 193—301.

⁶⁸ Eloge du Czar Pierre, p. 218.

When

When we review the variety of this great man's labours, his attention to the interests of learning, his encouragement of the merchant, his promotion of all acts of industry, his zealous endeavours to introduce a proper spirit of religious toleration, his circumspection to detect all the hidden sources of public oppression, and his charitable care of the poor, we bitterly lament that any determinate marks of cruelty should be discovered in a character so truly patriotic and splendid. But although the rigid laws of history compel us to proclaim his crimes; yet we can never be persuaded, by royal prejudice, to think that the heart of the founder of Russian civilization⁶⁹ was utterly destitute of humanity, of greatness of spirit, or of virtue⁷⁰.

⁶⁹ Mr. Coxe, vol. iii. p. 133 considers the account of the Russian civilization under Peter to be exaggerated; but he must advance more weighty arguments than he has done, before I can subscribe my assent to an opinion so opposite to the general testimony of native and foreign historians.

⁷⁰ In these short and decisive words the character of the Czar is summed up by the great King of Prussia: "Le Czar n'avait aucune tincture de humanité, de magnanimité, ni de vertu." See *Lettres du P. R. de Prusse et de M. de Voltaire*, tom. lxxxiv. p. 306.—Perhaps the impartial reader may not be inclined to make that wide distinction between the philosophical Frederick and the bloodthirsty Peter, when he recollects the singular cruelty and oppression of the former to the innocent Trenck. For authentic details of that persecuted man, see *Tower's Memoirs of the Life and Reign of Frederick of Prussia*, vol. ii. p. 331, &c.

Details of his private Life.

IT is a wise policy, perhaps, of oriental monarchs to escape in their seraglio from the too close observation of their subjects; for few would be found to sustain the dignity of their superior rank, if exposed too often to the public view. Could we behold sovereigns in their shades of privacy, our respect would greatly abate for the royal character; since we should see the man, when stripped of the imposing ensigns of authority, nothing exempt from our weaknesses and follies, more accustomed to levity of conduct than seriousness of thought, and generally preferring the most frivolous amusements to the most important pursuits¹. The diligent and laudable curiosity of an individual² has supplied us with
 authen-

¹ A striking contrast to this remark is to be seen and admired in the domestic virtues of his present Majesty, whose private life might furnish *the subject of a just and ample panegyric*, by its edifying example of mental activity and diffuse benevolence.

² M. de Staehlin, a laborious German, and preceptor to the unfortunate Peter the third, has collected in one octavo volume, the most curious anecdotes of the great Peter; and
 in

authentic materials to follow Peter in the most interesting scenes of his private life; and our readers may be induced to think, we have not concealed his vices, nor exalted his virtues, when he shall appear unmasked in his equal intercourse with his subjects. The consciousness of superior merit enabled him to despise the pomp of royalty. It was his pride to behold his nobles and people acknowledge their master in a dress, which would have been rejected perhaps by the most parsimonious of men; familiar with artificers and sailors, and sometimes affecting their manners: yet his authority was never impaired amidst these loose and illiterate companions.

A wooden cottage, over which has been erected a brick building on arches³, to preserve it from the weather, as a precious memorial of his great and rapid exertions, was the place to which he retired for rest after he had laid the foundations of St. Petersburg. In this residence was only to be

in the end of his work, he has given us a short alphabetical list of the name, rank, and history of his authorities. I have selected him for my chief guide without hesitation or fear, as his situation and impartiality give him the fairest pretensions to belief. *Anecdotes Originales de Pierre le Grand*; à Strasbourg, 1787.

³ See Storch's *Tableau de St. Petersburg*.

seen a bed, table, compass, and some books and papers. In the shortest days of the winter, which are not more than seven hours in this latitude, the indefatigable sovereign was prepared for the various and important duties of the day at four in the morning. It was his usual custom to labour alone for the public service till the morning light; and we may venture to affirm, that few of his subjects were disposed to interrupt the prosecution of his studies at this unreasonable hour.

Sometimes he employed that time, which most of his subjects dedicated to rest, in the dispatch of urgent business with his ministers. At the sixth hour, he directed his attention to the great concerns of the Senate and Admiralty; and by this noble parsimony of time, and with his activity of genius, he was enabled to regulate with ease the different concerns of peace and war, and still to enjoy many hours for his favourite pursuits. His rare application, which seemed to consider every moment abused that was not employed in the discharge of some private or public labour, was little indulgent to the repose of Catharine *. Before the sixth hour of the morning had passed, her occupations commenced;

* Levesque, tom. v. p. 162, 163.

but

but though she was summoned so early to the cares of the empire, yet her humanity forebore to measure so rigorously the slumbers of her domestics.

The royal table was always served at one ; and in the choice of his dishes Peter was not less distinguished from the poorest of his subjects, than by the splendour of his attire. His ordinary food consisted of soup with four krout, which the Russians called *chtchi*, gruel, lampreys, cold roast meat seasoned, pickled cucumbers, or salted lemons, and pig, with four cream for sauce ; while Limbourg cheese* was uncommonly agreeable to his plebeian appetite. But he compensated for this hasty and frugal dinner with such copious draughts of French and Hungarian wines, and of the strong liquors of his country, that his guests might easily perceive he was not very scrupulous in his adherence to the laws of temperance. Cast in a mould of uncommon strength, and delighting in violent exercises, one repast could not satisfy the voraciousness of his appetite. To whatever place his va-

* See Anecdote lxxxv. p. 209. for a degrading though laughable instance of royal œconomy, where the Czar measures the size of his favourite cheese with his compasses, and notes it down in his pocket-book, for the ignoble purpose of ascertaining and punishing the petty depredations of his servants.

rious avocations called him, he never forgot to be provided with a sufficient quantity of cold meats.

His predecessors considered that they conferred the highest honour upon the Patriarch and Boyars and foreign ministers, if they invited them to the royal table; and even then separate seats were always placed for them, lest they should be profaned by a too equal intercourse with their guests. The more unstately disposition of Peter led him to the port whenever the arrival of a Dutch ship was announced. Impressed with the many advantages to be derived from the condescension of the sovereign to foreigners, he familiarly accepted the wine and biscuits and brandy, which were offered aboard by the captains; but perhaps the fastidious would be at a loss to perceive the utility of the motive, and inclined to censure that want of dignity which suffered him to admit these trading captains to his table.

Instead of those magnificent entertainments of the ancient Czars, where the table was oppressed by the weight of the gold and silver plate, the emperor established a *messe* with his ministers, his generals, and favourites. Each of them paid his share, which rarely exceeded

⁵ See Olearius, tom.i. liv.iii. p. 310. Raffaello Barberino, p. 210.

the value of a ducat. The satirical malevolence of his enemies has insinuated, that he adopted this plan to compensate his principal cook for the scantiness of his wages and perquisites. But, if the table was not served with a profusion of costly dishes, there was no œconomy observed in the distribution of wine. ⁶ The juice of the grape has been no less fatal to the happiness than to the constitution of man, by unlocking those secrets, the discovery of which may urge a despot to instant revenge. And the severity of history forces us to declare that, in the careless gaiety of the table, the dæmon of suspicion still lurked in the royal breast; and to lament that he could not rise to the magnanimity of pardoning an indiscreet word, which was uttered only when reason was entirely extinguished ⁷.

⁶ Sir William Temple and Lord Horatio Walpole, who filled their diplomatic stations with no less credit to themselves than honour to their country, seem to be well aware of the use of the bottle in extracting secrets of high political importance. The former was accustomed to say, that the best intelligence is obtained by the convivial intercourse of a good table; and though a most rigid œconomist, the same table was always kept in his absence by his secretary. See Coxe's *Memoirs of Horatio Lord Walpole*, chap. xlii. p. 465. The delicate constitution of Temple, although unable to bear the deep potations of the Germans, was yet always attended, on necessary occasions, by some gentleman properly trained for that trying service. See Temple's *Works* vol. i. p. 226.

⁷ This odious part of his conduct is revealed to us by Levesque, tom. v. p. 165.; and Gordon, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 38.

It

It was the invariable maxim of the Czars to receive the first audience of ambassadors with every circumstance of pomp which might display the greatness of the empire. The uncereemonious Peter presented himself to these representatives of their sovereigns, without the smallest attention to any of the rules prescribed by courtly etiquette. It was his constant and certainly not improper expression, that they were sent to be introduced to him, and not to his halls or palaces. One instance will be sufficient to convince the reader, that in this respect his actions perfectly corresponded with his words. When the grand mareschal and ambassador of the Prussian court, Printz, wished to present his credentials to the conqueror of the renowned Charles, and to the ruler of an immense empire, he was conducted on board of an unfinished ship^{*}. Unaccustomed to such little ceremony, he demanded to be ushered into the presence of the Russian emperor. The attendants pointed to a man who was actively employed in arranging some ropes to the top of a mast. Peter, for such was the dextrous sailor[†], on recognizing the ambassador, called on

^{*} See *Lettres du P. R. de Prusse et de M. de Voltaire*, tom. lxxiv. p. 307.

[†] A noble and judicious traveller thus neatly ridicules the preposterous passion of the Czar for making all his nobles sailors :

on him to ascend the shrouds, but the astonished and stately Prussian pleaded his inability to perform so new and dangerous a task. The alert monarch then instantly descended and held a conference with him on deck; where he probably manifested the same disregard to those forms, which to execute with a proper dignity is reckoned by some monarchs, as the most essential duties of their high station.

The unlimited obedience which Peter invariably exacted and received from his subjects, accustomed him to confound the independence of foreign ministers with the servility of his people, and to expect from their courtesy a similar acquiescence to his caprices. One day this proficient in navigation proposed to them an aquatic excursion from Petersburg to Cronstadt. The ambassadors set sail in a Dutch packet-boat, under the

failors : “Forse per dar l'esempio a suoi, che voleva far divenire marinaj a ogni modo. Per la medesima ragione fu da lui ordinato, che non dovessero i Bojardi venire a corté ne a cavallo, ne in carrozza, ma giaccheto; che non se dovessero passare i fiumi su ponti, ma in barchette; e queste non co remi ma si avessero a governare con la vela.” See Opere di Algarotti, Viaggia de Russia, tom. v. p. 63. Gordon tells us that he has more than once appeared incognito as a common pilot, and received an English crown and cheefe for bringing a ship from the bar to Cronstadt, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 311, 312.

R r

guidance

guidance of the scientific Emperor. Before they had measured half of their voyage, a strong wind blew from the west, a slight mist was perceived, and a black cloud gathered at a distance in the horizon. The experience of the royal pilot predicted the approach of a storm; and his nautical judgment was not deceived. Its appearance presently became dreadful, while the livid glare of lightning and the tremendous peals of thunder did not serve to pacify the terrors of the diplomatic crew. One of them, whom we may suppose to be the least familiar with these horrific scenes, conjured the Emperor, with every sign of fear, to hasten towards the land. "I beseech your majesty," exclaimed the angry ambassador, "to return to St. Petersburg, or to Peterhoff, which is still nearer, and to remember that the object of my mission to Russia was not to be drowned: for, if I perish here, and the present prospect shews me no other destiny, your majesty must be responsible to my master for the loss of his representative."—"Sir," replied the Emperor, with an unconsoling and mortifying pleantry, (for his natural fearlessness of temper, not more than his experience, had banished all apprehensions of danger from his mind,) "if you are drowned, we must all share the same fate, and then none will remain to account

count to your court for the untimely end of your excellency."

The most elevated station offered no safeguard to the bold tyranny of Peter, who delighted to reduce all his subjects to the same common level of dependence. His general of the police, Desiere, was one day chosen to accompany him in his two-wheeled open carriage; for his hardy nature disdained to enjoy, in the utmost inclemency of the weather, the luxurious convenience of a coach. In their ride they were obliged to cross a small bridge, the planks of which were so loose and deranged, that they could not pass over them without incurring some danger. This unexpected impediment compelled the Emperor to alight: but while the necessary adjustment was making by his *dentchtchiks*, the cane of the enraged Peter admonished his companion to exercise a keener vigilance in the discharge of his high trust. When the planks were replaced, Peter mounted his travelling vehicle, and, in a tone, which bespoke the most perfect composure of temper, said to his chastised associate, "Be seated, be seated, my brother." Yet this harsh and ignominious treatment, which would be justly esteemed a most intolerable evil in the freedom of our minds, was scarcely noticed, much less resented, by the Russian subject.

These chastisements were sometimes productive of the most lamentable consequences. He had engaged in his service a famous architect of Paris, named Le Blond. This man had the misfortune of falling under the heaviest displeasure of Mentchikoff; but as the architect, with more boldness than prudence, had successfully exposed his calumnies to the Emperor, they were always punished with the cane of his master. Some slight alterations in the lower garden of the beautiful plantation of Peterhoff, by the architect, gave the minister however an opportunity of dispatching a courier to the Czar, to inform him that all the plantation was felling by his orders. The alarmed monarch hastened immediately to Peterhoff. In crossing the park, he beheld the workmen employed in lopping the branches of some of the trees. In the first transports of his rage he met Le Blond, and, prompted by passion, a counsellor whose sway was almost perpetual over his mind, gave him a blow. The high-spirited architect was so much affected by this insult, that it brought on a violent fever. On a more close inspection of the affair, the Emperor perceived he had most unjustly accused the intention of the Frenchman: but the discovery was made too late; not all his sincere atonement could wipe off the shame of the late

late affront from the memory of Le Blond; From that moment his health gradually declined; and in the following year he fell a victim to his wounded honour. His death should have proved an awful warning to the Czar, how great ought to be the study of a prince, who seeks the happiness of his people to conquer those passions, the existence of which must ever hinder his throne from being called the permanent seat of virtue and reason.

Yet the Czar could vindicate his character from the charge of despotism with such a mixture of dignified candour and firmness, as might tempt us almost to believe, that his most bloody cruelties were the result of a too passionate admiration of exemplary justice. A consciousness perhaps, that some of his deeds would lead Europe to view him in the odious light of a tyrant, made him enquire his character from one of his nobles lately returned from an embassy. The minister, when questioned on this delicate subject, confessed to the Czar, that his actions were arraigned for their excessive severity. "Come, let not your greatness of respect endeavour to soften the unpleasing word," replied the monarch, "they give me the name of tyrant. But the title would quickly be dropped, if they knew in what a peculiar condition I am placed; if

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knew how much is required of me, and how often I am forced to raised the arm of justice against those who labour with an unnatural zeal to overturn those measures which I judge consistent with the public welfare¹⁰. From the implacable passions, the destructive measures, which haunt the throne of tyranny, I am free. The reproach of cruelty therefore cannot be made without manifest injustice. On the contrary, it is my glory and delight to be surrounded by subjects in whom I have discovered marks of genius and patriotism. These I have consulted and employed; and my gratitude has been testified for their services."

The following example may perhaps serve to substantiate the latter part of this too ostentatious declaration, by shewing us that he could cheerfully submit his wildest passions to the government of reason whenever he was addressed with manly freedom. In his precipitate ardour for commercial improvements, he had signed an ukase which commanded the labours of the peasants belonging to the proprietors of the governments of Petersburg

¹⁰ From the stubborn opposition with which the ignorant Russians encountered his most enlightened plans, assisted by his partiality for a nautical life, he was moved perhaps to declare, "that it was a happier station to be an admiral in England, than Czar in Russia." See Perry, p. 164.

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and Novgorod to be entirely directed to the construction of the Ladoga canal. The obedient senate had assembled to give their sanction to this injurious law. Prince Jacob Feodovitz Dolgoroukof, one of their most illustrious members, whose undaunted spirit would not have disgraced the name of Cato, boldly cried out that such a measure must tend to the complete destruction of the two provinces, which were already too much reduced to a state of want and wretchedness; and, not content with this free statement of his opinion, he demanded the right of expressing his disapprobation before Peter. He was answered, that his representations would prove of no effect, as the law had already been confirmed by the signature of the Czar. Without deigning to hold any farther discourse with men, whose ignoble fears had sacrificed the true interest of their country, he snatched the register, and instantly tore out the leaf on which the oppressive decree was inscribed. Astonishment and trepidation never were more strikingly depicted in the features of the whole senate, than on this unparalleled act. With one voice the senators demanded if he was sensible to what dangers he had exposed himself. "Yes," replied the virtuous prince, "and I will answer for the act before my God, my country, and my Emperor."

In the midst of their consternation, the Emperor appeared. The perilous task of announcing to him the audacity of Dolgourokof was imposed on the procurer general, the first member of the senate. But the subject, who could thus scorn to pour the unction of servile compliance on measures which involved the public safety, must not be placed in that numerous and contemptible class who were chastised with blows for their offences, and then afterwards restored to their former honours: for, when he marked the rising passion of the Emperor, he rose without fear, and, with a look which awed even majesty itself, he thus spoke the triumphant language of reason and of patriotism. “Dismiss thy anger, *Peter Alexiévitch*, and do not suffer me to encourage the unworthy opinion that you are actuated by that spirit which led Charles the Twelfth to become the destroyer of his country. Did you weigh the subject with your accustomed attention, before you ordered the depopulation of two provinces, which above all have felt the desolating scourge of war? Are you fully apprised of the number of inhabitants which have already been sacrificed to the vengeance of the enemy, and how much their deep distress calls for your compassion? I am not insensible to the advantages which may be derived
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from the formation of this canal : but let a more judicious policy teach you to draw from each of your provinces, in proportion to the numbers therein contained, a body of people adequate to the execution of this unhealthy but beneficial undertaking ; or, rather, let the Swedish prisoners be employed in this work, that you may avoid the disgrace of ruining the country which is indebted for its present greatness to your enlightened labours.”—As the bold senator proceeded in his severe lesson of truth and wisdom, the indignation of the Emperor gradually subsided ; and after some moments of reflexion on the rash exercise of his power, the Czar shewed himself capable of laying aside his fiercest resentment, when he declared that his objections merited his notice, and the publication of the ukase should be delayed until they were acquainted with the result of his deliberations. The end of this remarkable scene proved agreeable to the salutary wishes of Dolgourokof ; and we are bound equally to applaud the penetration and firmness of the man who dared to discover and resist the injustice of the decree, and the magnanimity of Peter, who could hear and obey the voice of his subject.

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After Alexis had been put to death, by the rigorous justice of the Czar, he lost the object of his fondest partiality, his second son, the offspring of his marriage with Catharine. The anguish of his grief was so violent on this unexpected calamity, that he shut himself up in the palace of Peterhoff, refused all sustenance during three days and three nights, and menaced with instant death those who should presume to disturb his solitude. This dangerous display of sorrow was a matter of astonishment to his servants, who had witnessed such repeated and striking instances of his undaunted temper of mind. But a keener insight into the heart of their master, would have discovered to them that remorse took a most active part in his affliction. Wrapped up in the contemplation of his own greatness, and tasting all the sweets of public admiration, when he pronounced the condemnation of Alexis he was led to believe he had performed a most virtuous sacrifice, for the present and future benefit of his country; but the sudden loss of his second son dimmed the lustre of this patriotic idea; and so far transported his imagination beyond the circle of reason, that he interpreted that sentence into an atrocious crime, which before was considered to have perpetuated his claims to public gratitude.

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In the midst of his immoderate distress, Russia remained without a sovereign, the senate without a magistrate, and the army without a chief, to execute the ordinary functions of the state. Catharine, although tenderly alive to the feelings of mother and wife, refused to indulge her grief at the expence of the public interest, and tried every gentle art to gain admittance to her husband. But finding all her former influence absorbed in the vortex of this domestic misfortune, as a last resource she applied to the sage and decisive councils of Dolgourokof for assistance. The senator consoled her by the assurance, that to-morrow she should enjoy the satisfaction of beholding the Emperor again return to the administration of public affairs. At an early hour he repaired to the chamber of the disconsolate Czar; several loud knocks announced his visit; but the silence which reigned around the forbidden apartment, might have tempted him to believe himself in the mansions of the dead, rather than in the palace of Peterhoff. Determined to break in upon his privacy, he called out to this terrible monarch, with an authoritative voice, to open the door; and on his refusal he threatened to enter his chamber by force. "Very well," exclaimed the enraged sovereign, "If I open
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the door, my first commands shall sentence you to death for this rashness". But when the door was thrown open, the dignified firmness of this patriotic subject struck that fear into him, which banished all thoughts of his tyrannical intention. "I come," said this intrepid nobleman, "to demand whom we shall nominate as Emperor, since you affect to renounce all the duties attendant on that exalted station." The conquered Czar embraced his friend and burst into tears. Dolgoroukof seized the favourable moment, conducted him to his joyful Empress, and presented the senate to him, who were graciously invited to dinner, and no more alarmed at the consequences of a second retirement.

The choleric temper of Peter, and the consciousness of an uncontrolled power, were the enemies which carried on the most successful war against his peace of mind and lasting reputation. Yet there were times when he could repel their most vigorous assaults in such a manner as leaves us sensibly to regret he could not always overmaster their power. A se-

¹² "Si j'ouvre, je t'abats la tête!" Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 501. There are some slight variations of this anecdote from the relation of Stæhlin, who loses sight of the character of Peter when he attempts to soften his impassioned reply. See this anecdote also related in Chantreau, tom. ii. p. 50.

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nator, whose virtues merited that his name should have been rescued from oblivion, was one day participating in the aquatic amusements of Peter, when the furious prince, suddenly recollecting that he had uttered some sentiments in the senate extremely offensive to him, started up in the boat, and, in the madness his passion, took the offender between his strong arms, with the horrible intention of burying him in a watery grave. "It is in your power to drown me," cried out the undismayed senator, "but thy history will record the act!" The repentant Czar instantly replaced him in his seat, thoroughly ashamed of his atrocious design. To what a towering height in virtue wouldst thou have attained, O prince, whose life now exhibits to our instruction such a mortifying compound of the dignity and weakness of human nature; if thy happier fate had so ordained, that those who called themselves your friends had thus always dared to hold up to your sight the steady mirror of truth and justice!

The vigorous mind of Peter had invariably laboured to convince his subjects, that superstition does not open the passage to the seat of eternal happiness. He was therefore the decided and unforgiving foe to all those im-

⁴³ Levesque, tom. v. p. 101.

positions which were expressly designed to cajole and inflame the superstitious passions of the vulgar. Information had been given to him, that, impelled by the call of fanaticism, crowds of people were collected in the church of St. Petersburg to adore the image of the Virgin, and to witness the sight of her miraculous tears. Ever eager to contribute to the downfall of credulity, so hostile to the progress of true faith, he hastened to the church to detect the fraud in the sight of the deluded people. On his arrival, he commanded this object of popular devotion to be unloosed from the place, to undergo his strict and profane examination. In the rites of the Russians, the images are painted on wood. The weeping figure had a double compartment; between the two coverings was a receptacle for oil, terminating in small apertures near the corner of the eyes; the heat of the burning wax around the image produced the desired effect on the gushing oil, which pursued its course through the secret openings. The skilful Peter, after having successfully demonstrated the mechanism to the astonishment of the spectators, carried the disgraced Saint to his cabinet, to be kept with other curious specimens of art. But the author of this dextrous invention was treated with greater indignity, as this piece of mechanism

chanism was purposely contrived to breathe into the abject soul of its votaries the unchristian spirit of discord and sedition : for it was the malevolent intention of the secret enemies of Peter, to have persuaded the superstitious people, that the tears of the virgin were shed to mark her deep horror at the foundation of his new capital.

It was the invariable and absurd custom of the ancient Czars, whenever their greatness was humbled by the hand of sickness, to order the gates of the prison to be thrown open to robbers and murderers sentenced to death, under the vain hope that their impious prayers might stop the stroke of death. The criminal judge wished him to follow this example. "What!" said the enlightened prince, in a faint but composed tone of voice, "if God turns a deaf ear to the supplications of my virtuous subjects, can you suppose that my malady will be abated by the liberation and prayers of these assassins? But depart, and let sentence be passed to-morrow on these malefactors; for if any thing can incline heaven to avert the impending danger, it will be the execution of this just command."

But though Peter was resolute in not extending the royal pardon to these practitioners in rapine and murder, yet he could display a most amiable indulgence to those
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softer transgressions of the female sex, of which false and ungenerous man is first the tempter and then the punisher. His severity however was inflexible to those unnatural mothers, who, to avoid the discovery of an act so offensive to their virtue, procured the abortion of their fruit, or else destroyed it after its existence. Yet, on maturer consideration, the monarch perceived that few would deserve this foul imputation so insulting to the rights of nature, if their frailties were less exposed to the derision of their fellow creatures. In one of the Czar's frequent and rapid journeys from Petersburg to Moscow, he stopped at a village to take his frugal repast. The humble house where he dined was soon surrounded by a multitude of peasants, impatient to behold the father of his country. With his usual gracious demeanour and familiarity of speech which gained the hearts of his subjects, he addressed himself to all, inquired concerning the state of their families, and the nature of their employments. Behind the crowd which pressed around him with eager respect, he remarked a young woman of pretty and genteel appearance, who manifested a great anxiety to see him, and yet wished to screen herself from his sight. Thinking to gratify her curiosity, he kindly bade her to approach. She bashfully advanced

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with her face covered by both her hands. The singularity of the action pleased him, and he loudly commended her modesty. Not all the reverence which majesty inspired could suppress a general burst of laughter from the envious female throng, when they heard such an unexpected, and, in their minds, ill-placed compliment. On demanding the cause of their merriment, a peasant stepped forth to inform his sovereign, that the young woman he had praised, whose good qualities were numerous, had yielded to the amorous wishes of a German officer, and that, to the great offence and surprise of her most chaste companions, she suckled the offspring of this illicit connection. The peasant having thus explained the cause of their laughter; the monarch, with a feeling benevolence which reflects the highest praise on his head and heart, commanded the infant to be brought to him; which, after taking into his arms, and caressing and recommending it to the care of the affectionate mother, he then promised to see her whenever he passed through the village, threw a handful of rubles into her lap, desired her to banish her sorrows, and respectfully kissed her, doubtless to the astonishment and mortification of the encircling females. Then changing the familiarity of his voice,

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and assuming the commanding look of majesty ; " Henceforth I order," said the Czar, " that none of her sex shun her society or reproach her for the weakness of her conduct."

This speech of the Czar's is certainly not much calculated to please the taste of the rigid moralist, as it pays no deference to the rules of virtue. But Peter was obliged to encourage population on any terms ; and so much did he conceive it his political duty to repair by gentle laws the injuries which it suffered from the ravages of war and of pestilence, that he never punished offences against chastity, either by corporal chastisement, fines, or any marks of infamy. Being informed once in a conversation concerning criminal jurisprudence, that Charles V. in one of his ordinances prohibited adultery under pain of death ; " Is it possible ?" replied the Emperor with a laugh of incredulity. " We should have conceived so great a prince would have acted with more judgment : but without doubt he fancied his people were too numerous : it is necessary to punish disorders and crimes, yet we should be cautious in passing a sentence of death on our subjects." But Peter seldom tried the success of this last experiment, or else the painful task would not have been imposed

posed upon us, of remarking, that in several instances his words but little accorded with his actions.

Averse to listen with a greedy ear to the whispers of detraction, except it concerned the state, whenever those spies, who are always to be found in the apartments of a palace, attempted to shoot the arrows of their malevolence, under the mask of public zeal, against those who had provoked their envy or resentment, the sovereign would thus express his just displeasure, in this reproachful inquiry: "Is there no trait of goodness to be marked in his character, and would it not be more honourable to make that the topic of our conversation?"

He was too deeply read in the history of commerce, to think, from a blind spirit of sordid avarice, that in regulating the customs at Petersburg, any greater punishment than confiscation was necessary for contraband trade. "According to the dictates of sound policy, we should consider commerce," says the experienced sovereign, "as a timid virgin, whom we must conciliate by gentleness of manners, and not terrify by sternness of accent. This unlawful road to wealth must not therefore be too much noticed by the severity of the law; for, those who are seen in it run more danger than my treasure. If

I only possess the fruits of their labour the tenth time, I shall be recompensed for the nine times which they have eluded my vigilance."

Peter was not ignorant that an Englishman, of deserved eminence in the school of literature, had compared him to that great child of vanity and ambition, Louis the fourteenth of France. "He was more great than I," said the Emperor, with real or affected modesty; "in no one instance perhaps can I assume the superiority but when I reduced my clergy to obedience, while he suffered his to become his tyrants."—But from many causes, the statue of Peter merits to be placed on a higher pedestal in the Temple of Fame. When Louis stimulated genius to her sublimest efforts by his political liberality, he raised for himself a solid edifice of greatness in the judgment of posterity. But his pretensions to the name of conqueror rest on a very frail basis. The French Xerxes glittered in the borrowed robes of his generals: for that success, which flew before his standard, had been prepared by a system of conquest and discipline devised by the wisdom of Richelieu, executed by the ardour of Condé, and seconded by the diligence of Louvois. In this view, the character of Peter shines with superior lustre in the hemisphere of renown:
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he had no masters to prepare and almost ensure his victories, but his own exertions of mind and body. If therefore Louis had held his doubtful sceptre over the factious and uncivilized Russians, and Peter had been seated on the throne of France, we may venture to assert, that the one would have been unnoticed in the estimation of personal merit, whilst the vices of the other, which chiefly flowed from the ungovernable ferocity of his temper, being early eradicated by the advantages of an enlightened education, would have enabled him to have raised his kingdom to a state of unexampled prosperity and greatness.

But it is not in this light only that we recognize the superiority of the Czar. He wished to support his dignity by his actions, and not, like the French monarch, to hide the insignificance of the man under the magnificence of the court. "A strict œconomy was the ruling principle of his administration, and the pure source of his greatness. The expences of his household were fixed; he calculated the sums necessary for the maintenance of the army, the fleet, and for all the wants of the state; and without deriving a copious supply from this annual revenue,

²⁴ See Gordon, vol. ii. p. 266, 267.

without forcing the nation to lament the grievance of excessive taxes, he had always an accumulation of treasure, to satisfy any sudden demand, and to execute any new project which he conceived would improve and adorn his empire.

Yet with all this rigid frugality, it was the constant business of his reign to connect reward with merit, happiness with fidelity. He abhorred the idea, that those who deserved his love from their faithful services, should see old age approach upon them without receiving some satisfactory mark of his bounty. He however so contrived to dispense his favours, that they more frequently contributed to benefit than to distress the different classes of society. From his ample fund of vacant lands, he generally recompensed their labours, and they were too well acquainted with their own interest, not to bestow every care on the improvement of their new inheritance. By this wise and beneficent policy, he repaired in a great degree the injuries which were made by the havoc of war in the fertile provinces of Ingria, Livonia, and Finland.

The smallness of his revenue was inadequate even to the purposes of an ordinary prince; yet with this poverty, he managed to execute such noble undertakings as may justly have excited the envy and admiration
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of the most wealthy sovereign. During the long space of twenty years, he waged a glorious war against Sweden in the zenith of her fame. Persia next felt his strong arm. In the midst of these turbulent and warlike scenes, which would have engrossed the whole attention of more confined abilities, he possessed sufficient time and resources to unite great cities by canals, to establish manufactories, to provide for the payment of an immense army, and to remunerate the services of skilful and industrious strangers. A deep insight into the character of different nations, formed a considerable part of those riches which thus enabled him to improve his acquired and hereditary patrimony. To those strangers who belonged to prodigal nations, his generosity may be almost said to degenerate into extravagance; whilst to others of opposite national features, he dealt out his rewards with a most sparing hand. But in this apparent inequality of treatment may be traced the lines of policy, though not perhaps of justice: for, the sums which he gave to the use of the spendthrift did not exceed his real expences, while his scanty allowance to the miser restrained his avarice within the bounds of moderation; so that neither character should wish, nor be able to change their abode from a superabundance of riches.

The Czar frequently gratified the wishes of his subjects, and strangers attached to the Russian service, in standing god-father to their children. But if custom had imposed on him the necessity of accompanying this high honour with magnificent presents, there can be very little doubt that from his œconomical spirit he would have been tempted to refuse their requests. Averse to reject their solicitations, but at the same time careful not to diminish his treasury by any extraordinary gifts, he at last obviated every pecuniary impediment, by the uniform rule of never giving more than a kiss and a rouble to the wife of a common soldier, while a ducat was obliged to content the wishes of the mothers of the first distinction.

When the severe frugality of the Czar enabled him to prevent that necessary but odious weed, taxation, from springing with too quick a growth in the garden of the state; the well-earned harvest of his labours might be reaped in the love and gratitude of his people. But the master of the Russian empire descended into a sordid meanness, when he appeared in mended shoes and patched stockings; while the most zealous admirers of state œconomy cannot esteem that practice a public saving, which led him to borrow, or rather to seize, the wig of the
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first nobleman who approached, whenever he felt his head incommoded by the coldness of the weather".

As the capriciousness of his temper and the desire to testify the good effects of example prevailed, he shewed himself ignorant or careless of those laws which are so rigorously observed by sovereigns in general. In the neighbourhood of Iltia, where a large forge was established, Peter had resided a month for the benefit of drinking the chalybeate waters. His active mind, which grasped at every kind of knowledge, led him to give some portion to the trade of a smith; and such was his proficiency, that, with the aid of the Boyars, and other noblemen of his train, who were obliged to perform on this singular occasion the menial offices of journeyman blacksmiths, he could soon boast of having forged eighteen poods of iron (the pood is equal to thirty English pounds) with his own hands. On his return to Moscow, he called on the master of the forge, commended his manufacture, and demanded "how much he assigned to a master workman for a bar of wrought iron, weighing thirty pounds?" "An altine," was the an-

" In the church of Dantzick, and in the time of divine service, the chief burgomaster experienced this *polite treatment* from the familiar Czar, doubtless to the no small astonishment of the grave audience. See Anecd. xii. p. 33.

swer of the unsuspicious proprietor. "Very well," replied the whimsical Czar; "my labours at your forge equal the value of eighteen altines, and I expect an immediate payment." The astonished master, ashamed not to estimate the exertions of his royal workman above their real value, presented him with eighteen ducats as a reward for his unexpected services. "Take back your ducats," said the monarch, "and pay me the usual price; for my labours, if they equal, do not surpass other blacksmiths. With the payment of the common wages, I shall purchase myself a pair of shoes, for which you see my want is urgent." He then left the master, to make his purchase. It was his delight to wear them, and to observe with a visible satisfaction of countenance, "Here are shoes, which, I may truly say, have been gained by the sweat of my brow."

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* Perhaps, if the Czar had been strictly attentive to the rules of justice, he should have distributed a portion of his gains among his fellow-assistants, but their awkwardness, in his opinion, might abridge their reward.—But this is not the only instance which can be quoted, where he ceased to remember the dignity of his person, and where the real or fancied advantage of benefiting his country by his industrious example cannot be allowed with any propriety to extenuate the offence. Hear the words of Gordon: "In winter he has been several times seen in a common hired sledge; and as it would sometimes happen, that he had not three pence (the

The sanguinary and violent exercise of the chase, which may be considered as the first of royal exercises, and the most ruinous to the property of the subject, where civilization has not arrived to any state of maturity, was viewed with an eye of indifference or rather aversion by Peter, who despised every amusement which could not preserve some connection with the improvement of his mind, or with the improvement of his people; yet the vast forests which overspread Russia might have permitted him to indulge the chase, without the smallest invasion on the rights of his subject. Instead however of having some great domestic officer appointed over the royal train of hunting; after the fashion of European princes, he kept only a few gamekeepers to furnish his table with game, and one or two surveyors to mark the timber in the forests of the environs, and pay particular attention to the preservation of the oaks. When once invited to a hunting-party, he thus reprehended the sport in the grave and manly language of a legislator and hero: " Hunt, hunt, gentlemen, as long as

(the fare), he has more than once asked the loan of this money from an accidental stranger;" vol. ii. Append.

P. 314.

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you please, and make war upon wild beasts: but be assured, it is an amusement of which I shall never partake, as long as I have enemies to conquer, and refractory subjects to govern." If he had always thus acted and expressed himself, the ungracious task of marking the irregular courses of this Russian meteor would never have been imposed on us in the progress of our work.

From the patriotic fear that he might lose some ideas advantageous to the state, the Czar turned a willing ear to all who appeared before him as projectors. If the merit of their proposal could not be ascertained without a variety of experiments, such operations were performed by men of approved skill, not only by his orders, but under his immediate inspection. When the project was deemed worthy of adoption, the author was bound by the ties of gratitude to style Peter his benefactor; and he still had reason to praise his liberality, even if the event of the experiment did not correspond with his wishes. In all designs which promoted the most distant hopes of increasing the national honour, the wisdom of Peter manifested a just contempt for œconomy. It was a sentiment fit to be entertained by a great monarch, that in the success of one useful projector was to be found an adequate

quate compensation for the failure of all those who had experienced his favours".

That nation must be extremely irregular and various in its advances to perfection, under the direction of a sovereign who leaves his conduct at times to fluctuate between impetuosity and despotism. In most of the actions of the Czar, this great blemish is to be discerned; that, in his endeavours to diffuse an emulation of knowledge among his subjects, he pushed his zeal to such an arbitrary height, that oftentimes an unconquerable abhorrence was felt and expressed for the pursuits of a science which would have given amusement and instruction, if his proceedings had been restrained within the limits of moderation. After this indefatigable prince, in his first visit to Holland, had toiled with the axe and saw of the ship-carpenter, for the satisfaction of beholding the commercial wheels of his state-machine move with a quicker circulation, he then, for his own pleasure, sought to handle the more delicate instruments of surgery. This amusement of a leisure hour was pursued with so much ardour, that in a short time he was enabled to perform several surgical operations, with a steadiness and dexterity of hand that merited the praise of his

" Levesque, tom. v. p. 188, 189.

instructor,

instructor, the celebrated anatomist Ruysch. It once happened that the love of this science led him to the anatomical cabinet of Boerhaave, where, among other curious subjects exposed for the student's observation, was a body prepared and moistened with the spirit of therbetine. The unexpected sight, and the strong smell, produced such an effect on the more delicate stomachs of some of his attendants, that they instantly betrayed all the symptoms of approaching sickness. Our own feelings would teach us to suppose, that the humanity of the sovereign, on perceiving their distress, would have endeavoured to afford them immediate relief by dispensing with their attendance: but to make civilized feeling our guide on this occasion, would be to destroy truth, a jewel of the most bright and lasting colour in the historical crown. The despot, (for in this instance his claims to that title are incontestible,) to overawe an aversion so natural, had recourse to the shocking, but some may perhaps think, decisive method of forcing each of them to bite a muscle of the body¹⁸ which

¹⁸ *Il leur ordonna de mordre chacun un muscle de ce corps défiguré ; il n'y avoit pas à balancer, ils obéirent.* Le Clerc, tom. iii. p. 158.—It must be obvious to all who have so far perused the private life of Peter, that the attachment of his subjects would have been more strong, if he had tempered his severity with the least indulgence to their prejudices or inclinations. The admirers of the Emperor would not have found occasion

which had created in them such visible emotions of disgust. Where such abuse of power reigns, it is vain to expect that the tide of civilization can flow on in a pure and uninterrupted course.

His passion for surgery returned with redoubled violence on his arrival in Russia. Few operations of consequence were performed in the hospitals at which he was not present, in the different though equally dreaded characters of spectator and assistant. Among the females honoured with an operation by the hand of the Emperor, was the wife of a Dutch merchant, who held a high place in his favour. The report had reached the surgical Czar, that she laboured under a dropsy, and yet was averse to the necessary operation of tapping. Eager to display his kindness and skill, he made her a visit, and his persuasion, or rather his commands, for it is very difficult to distinguish one from the other in his government, at last

occasion perhaps to bewail so often his brutal and violent tyranny, if he had cast his eye on that sage reflexion which the Emperor Julian puts into the mouth of old Silenus, in his celebrated fable of the Cæsars: “Οὐ γὰρ εἰς ἓν ἔτι ἔπταν, ἔτι θύον ἄρχων, ἔτι ἡμίονον, ἥμισα δὲ ἀνθρώπων, μή τι καὶ τῶν καυχασμένων αὐτοῖς, συγχυρόντα· ὥσπερ ἴδ’ ὅτι τοῖς ἀσθενέσι οἱ λαοὶ μὴκρὰ ἐνδιδέσων, ἢ ἐν τοῖς μύθοισιν, ἔχουσιν αὐτοὺς πενδομένους.” See Juliani Opera; Lipsæ, 16, 6; p. 314.

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wrung from her a very unwilling obedience to his wishes. The patient sealed her compliance with her life. But the abilities of the imperial operator were rescued from all disgrace, by the despicable voice of flattery vehemently exclaiming, that the progress of her disease had been so much increased by long neglect, as to baffle the exertions of all human skill.

Every study allied to useful knowledge is entitled to some degree of notice from the monarch, who professes to place his happiness in the improvement of his people; but his curiosity is no longer laudable, nay, rather becomes the secret object of ridicule and imposition, when it occupies too large a portion of his time. In the close attention of the Czar to the different branches of surgery, he forgot the dignity of his person, without benefiting his people. Not content with the dissection of the human body, he still farther debased his elevated station by becoming a dentist; and in that character, the audacity of one of his domestics prepared for him the shame of making him the instrument of his revenge. The slave had conceived that the chastity of his wife was doubtful; and unfortunately for the suspected partner of his bed, he had not obtained such an happy ascendancy over his passions, as to view the real
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or imaginary offence with the composure and forgiveness of a philosopher. He therefore dressed up his countenance in artificial sorrow when he next appeared before the Czar, and told him, on his inquiring the cause, that he had been lamenting the strange obstinacy of his wife, who was troubled with a raging tooth-ache, and yet would not consent to be released from her pain. The credulous sovereign, delighted with this opportunity of exercising his pelican, hastened to the unsuffering female, compelled her to be seated, examined her mouth, then fixed on the supposed cause of her pain, and, deaf to her entreaties and remonstrances, performed the operation. Some days afterwards, the Czar discovered he had been serving the cruel malice of his servant; and he must have secretly blushed at the remembrance of his own folly and rashness, when he chastised the audacity of this menial.

Few perhaps would wish to become sovereigns, if they were obliged to perform the various labours of the first Emperor of Russia. All kinds of occupations were contained in the sphere of his activity. In that leisure which he enjoyed from the rigorous measurement or denial of sleep, his mind was left free and open for literary labours; and among the

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fruits

fruits of his mental industry, his treatises on Maritime Affairs¹⁹, and his translations of the Architecture of Sebastian, Le Clerc Plumier's Art of a Turner²⁰, a System of Mechanics, and Sturm's Method of constructing Sluices and Canals, will ever be considered as honourable proofs of his morning and evening application. Nor is the minute diligence with which he examined the versions of those men, whom he had selected to interpret the words and thoughts of foreign writers into his vernacular tongue, less deserving of our applause. But unless he had himself been indefatigable in the inspection of their undertakings, their servile dispositions might have presented an insurmountable bar to the efforts and improvements of his people. He had employed a monk of some abilities in the translation of Puffendorf's Introduction to the History of European States; who, unmindful of the sacred importance of truth, and prompted only by the mean passions of fear or interest, had designedly omitted a passage where the Swedish historian lashed the character of the Russians with all the vigour of independence. He presented his imperfect

¹⁹ Fontenelle, *Eloge du Czar Pierre I.* p. 228.

²⁰ Strahlenberg bears witness to his skill in turnery, gunnery, and naval architecture, p. 237.

work to the prince", who soon discovered his silence on the offensive passage, and his general attempt to involve the sense of the author, whenever inglorious to his nation, in the smoke of obscurity. After the monarch had severely reprehended his wilful misconduct, and commanded him to render his version more faithful, he was dismissed from his presence with this wise and emphatic injunction: "Remember, it is not flattery, but instruction which I wish my subjects to find in the perusal of this work: for it is only by acquainting themselves with the real sentiments of foreigners that they can hope to correct their errors, and to appreciate my endeavours to fix the national character in the esteem and respect of Europe."

In the course of Peter's life, we have had frequent occasions to admire the greatness and goodness of his actions when his passions were under the dominion of reason: and we can imagine that the Emperor would have arrived at the highest pitch of private and public virtue; would have blended in his character the wisdom of the sage with the activity of the prince, if his early days, when the passions float loose and careless on the

²² A part of his leisure was always devoted to the perusal and study of philosophers and historians. See Theophanes apud Consett, p. 324.

surface of life, and therefore most easy to receive any impression proper or improper, had received the advantages of a good education. The confession of the renowned Socrates presents a striking example how much art can overcome nature; how much the most disorderly and vicious propensities may be changed into a pure benevolence by instruction: and Peter, when he yielded not to the passions of the moment, shews us that he could almost realize his claims to our ideal excellence. We shall close the details of his private life with the relation of an adventure, rendered interesting from the plan of operation and the celebrated names of its actors; the plot and catastrophe of which was designed by the Czar.

An envoy of Poland, on his return to Dresden, had stopped at an inn in Courland, where he witnessed a quarrel between some common people inflamed with liquor. One of them, more injured, or more perhaps the object of particular abuse, declared that, if circumstances permitted, he could obtain the protection of persons of such consequence as would teach them to repent the insolence of their present language. These boastful words attracted the notice of the envoy, who, on a more close survey of the angry speaker, fancied he recognized, through his beggarly garments

garments and rustic demeanour, some resemblance to the wife of the Czar. Desirous to know the condition of a person whose external appearance so ill corresponded with his threats, he learned that he was a Polish or Lithuanian peasant, who served in the stables of an inn.

The singularity of their meeting, and his likeness to Catharine, induced the envoy to make him the subject of a letter to one of his friends at St. Petersburg. This letter, by design or accident, came into the hands of the Czar, whose curiosity was so much aroused by the account, that he ordered prince Repnin, governor of Riga, to make diligent search after Charles Skavronski, for such was the name of this mysterious stranger, and to entice him into his government. Skavronski was soon entangled in the net prepared for him, came into Livonia, and, as a suspicious character, was arrested and conveyed to St. Petersburg.

Committed to the care of the general of the police, he underwent repeated examinations, but still beheld no prospect of his deliverance. The persons appointed to gain his confidence obtained from him what little he knew concerning his birth. According to his relation, he had preserved some confused remembrance of a sister; he knew that she had been made

prisoner at Marienbourg, and believed her engaged in the service of some noble Russian family. He had even formerly heard it reported she had become the mistress of Chermettef, or Mentchikoff; in fact, he believed himself related to the concubine of a great lord; and his menaces to his companions might have proceeded from the sense of her elevation.

His new friends pretended to lament the injustice of his confinement; and made him sensible that his hopes of deliverance were very precarious, unless he could address the Emperor in person: while they comforted him by the assurance that his case should be represented in a memorial to the prince. During the time that his mind was diverted by their professions of friendship, the anxious Czar was apprized of all his answers, and had dispatched a confidential messenger into Courland to gather every information relative to the past events of his life. When he was possessed of the necessary information for elucidating the business, he ordered the supposed criminal to be introduced to him after dinner, at the house of one of the officers of the palace named Stcheplesf. The interrogations were made by the monarch himself, and the desired interview was terminated by the royal promise of attention to his affair.

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In the evening, Peter related to his Empress how much he had been entertained at the house of Stcheplef, and expressed a wish that she should surprise him with her company the next day. His invitation was of course accepted: and Stcheplef affected astonishment at the extraordinary condescension of his sovereign.

When the dinner was removed, the Empress seated herself at the window. Peter approached her with the young man, to whom he repeated the same questions which he made the preceding evening. At each answer, the interested Czar recommended the princess to attend. After his explicit account had fully convinced him of his fraternal alliance to Catharine, he turned round to the agitated Empress, and asked, "Whether she was at a loss to perceive the tendency of this conference?" "*But, but,*"—replied the disconcerted wife of the Emperor, in a faltering tone of voice, while her colour forsook her cheeks. "*But,*"—interrupted the impassioned Czar, "if you affect a dullness of comprehension, it is sufficiently evident to me, that this young man is entitled to claim from you all the love of a sister. Come," said the prince to the astonished Skavronski, "first kiss the hand of that lady, as the Empress, and then embrace her with all the affection of a brother." Ca-

tharine fainted on this declaration so mortifying to her vanity. The Czar betrayed all the anxiety of the fondest husband for her recovery ; and afterwards he thus consoled her wounded pride : " What evil is there to be descried in this discovery ? It is very apparent that this man is my brother-in-law ; and if he possesses any merit, we shall make something of him."

The happy brother remained some time in the house of Stcheplef ; his tattered garments were exchanged for others more adapted to his present state ; and men of learning were summoned to improve the deficiency of his education, that his mind might expand with his good fortune. Under the reign of his sister, his prosperity was considerable, his person invested with the ribbon of St. Andrew, his name ennobled with the title of Count, and his character highly respectable in the eyes of the virtuous. His life was passed in a happy retirement ; and his interest with Catharine never exerted but in the cause of the unfortunate ²².

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²² Since the acute and impartial criticism of Mr. Coxe, vol. ii. note, p. 278. seems inclined to question the existence of this Skavronski, this interesting story would have stood on a very tottering basis of credit, if it could only be found in Voltaire's *Histoire de Russie* : but Mons. Levesque informs us of his own possession of a manuscript copy of this singular anecdote,

The conclusion of the Emperor's private life appears the most suitable place to draw his character, whose establishment of a new seat of empire, introduction of the most important and beneficial changes in the civil and religious constitution of Russia, and warlike achievements, have deservedly affixed to his name the appellation of *the Great*. By endeavouring to separate the clouds of incense and obloquy, in which he has been equally involved by the extravagant fondness of his admirers and the implacable malice of his enemies, we may aspire, with modesty, to the arduous task of painting the virtues and vices of this extraordinary man, in such colours of moderation and candour as may stand the severest scrutiny of historical truth.

The choicest gifts of nature were bestowed with a most liberal hand on the person and mind of the illustrious founder of St. Peter-

anecdote, which he has thought proper to insert in his History, and which I have followed : and his evidence is always marked with such acuteness and fidelity as to satisfy the most guarded suspicion. See Histoire de Russie, tom. v. p. 195—198.—Chantreau, who relates this anecdote, with some slight variations, prefaces his story by informing his readers, that this fraternal discovery of Peter is a confirmed thing, *une chose averée*, at St. Petersburg ; and concludes, by saying that Skavronski has been “ la souche d’une maison qui figure actuellement parmi les plus distinguées de la Russie ;” tom. ii. p. 65—70.

burg.

burg. His figure was tall, graceful, and commanding; his deportment easy and dignified; his eye gracious and penetrating; and on his countenance was marked, in strong characters, that unshaken fortitude and acute comprehension, which impressed even his friends with awe, his enemies with terror. Neglected in his education, yet he inherited from nature a quick discernment, and manly elocution, which he knew how to exert, whenever the occasion called, with the happiest effect. Both his purposes and disposition invited him to descend from the unsocial greatness of the throne, and to participate in all the pleasures and comforts of familiar intercourse. But many years elapsed before the royal example was followed by a court, so deeply prejudiced in favour of the vain forms of eastern pride and splendour. By this association with the highest and lowest ranks, and judicious frankness and affability, he secured the affections of the people, without seeming to court their favour. The licentious voice of faction has dared to dispute the sincerity of his friendship; but the celebrated names of Le Fort and Mentchikoff need only be pronounced, to silence its boldest calumnies.

In the dispatch of business, the most complicated that ever engaged the attention of a great monarch, the activity of his mind and
body

body was equally wonderful. In the same day, this reformer of his country was employed in the labours of trade, in the pursuits of literature, in the formation of laws, in the decisions of justice, and in the plan and execution of victorious engagements by land and by sea. In summer or winter, peace or war, his exertions were equally unexampled and unimpaired ; and such was the celerity of his journeys, that his subjects, not more than his foes, have beheld with astonishment the presence of the Czar, when they supposed him at the most distant part of the empire³³.

It might be with justice imagined, that such minute and preposterous diligence would defeat the ends proposed, by introducing confusion and error where regularity and method alone should preside ; but Peter possessed the rare art of directing his attention to small as

³³ In a public discourse composed and pronounced by Theophanes, we are pleased to behold the gratitude and patriotism of the learned archbishop thus celebrate, with honest zeal, the firm, daring, and indefatigable spirit of his Emperor. “ Equidem scimus, infractum animum tuum non concuti terroribus, non deficere in adversis, non trepidare ad belli tonitrua ; videmus enim te ob nostra commoda omnibus tuis commodis *perpetuo* renuntiasse, frigus et æstus perferre, longa et difficilia itinera suscipere, per medias acies ignesque volitare ; et quid non agere, quos labores, quæ defugere pericula ?” Vide Panegyricus de Victoriâ à Petro I. Imp. in Succ. Exercit. reportata, A. D. 1709 ; Jun. xxvi. Kiov. 1709.

well as great objects, with a degree of precision and dispatch of which his ignorant people had little or no conception; and his plans were no less formed to affect Russia in her present than future state. Even those who were the most obnoxious to his measures had the generosity to allow, that he had a head to conceive and a hand to execute designs, apparently most impracticable, without being intimidated by the hatred of a powerful faction, or by the clamours of a superstitious multitude²⁴.

By the confession of his enemies, (and their praise supercedes all other panegyric,) he displayed in the field the uncommon talent of blending promptitude and courage of action with the keenest penetration in the decisions of the council. The threatening wariness of Fabius, and the impetuous bravery of

²⁴ Bishop Burnet, who had frequent opportunities of conversing with Peter, when in England, observes, "that he seemed designed by nature rather to be a ship-carpenter than a great prince." See his History of his own time, Lond. 1753, p. 307. I am apt to think that the admirers of the prelate of Sarum will not quote this passage as a proof of his political discernment. Even the royal Frederic, who is so slow to perceive his merits, so quick to expose his faults, draws a much higher character of him than the bishop: "*Pierre I. mourut dans ces circonstances, laissant dans le monde plutot la reputation d'un homme extraordinaire, que d'un grand homme, et couvrant les cruautés d'un tiran des vertues d'un legislateur.*" Hist. de la Maison de Brandenbourg.

Scipio, were qualities he could assume with equal dexterity and success for the safety or glory of his empire.

To his genius therefore, and not to his fortune, we must ascribe those striking and permanent advantages which he gained over the foreign and domestic foes of his country.

A love of fame instigated him to all his great exploits. And his behaviour, after the decisive battle of Pultowa, and critical situation on the total defeat of his army at Narva, enabled him to convince the world, by two most remarkable examples, that he merited the rare praise of sustaining prosperity with moderation, adversity with firmness. Time, that destroyer of the proud trophies of conquerors, may crumble his victories into the dust; but the Father and Reformer of Russia will safely deride his extremest malevolence. Those immortal titles which so exalt him above the level of the common kings of the earth, he must ever retain, as long as the sons of Russia shall be prosperous by their industry, powerful by their army and navy, polished by the love of learning, liberalized by the practice of social virtues, united at home, and formidable abroad by the rapidity and extent of their conquests. And, were we to suppose that he could now cast a look on his beloved St. Petersburg, in her present colossal greatness,

ness, in the full meridian of her civilization, in her accession of arts and sciences and commercial wealth, he might, whilst gazing with rapture, exultingly exclaim ; " As long as these bright and happy scenes of public honour and prosperity shall crown this capital, so long will my memory be engraven in the hearts of a grateful posterity ! "

Yet the solemn voice of truth constrains us to declare that, in an attentive examination of the character of Peter, there were several qualities wanting to throw a lustre and beauty on the whole appearance. The prying eye of malice will discover that his intemperance, a vice most unbecoming the dignity of a monarch, often proved fatal to those who approached his person, or were subject to his power ; and he was once on the brink of proclaiming to his people, when his reason was jointly inflamed by the draughts of intoxication and the natural violence of his passions, that he could practise the same rash barbarity upon his fearless friend and monitor le Fort, as that which has blasted the reputation of Alexander, and immortalized the virtue of Clytus. With equal truth, it may be also observed, his sordid parsimony sunk him into the disgraceful character of a miser. Humanity must also deplore that, in the coolness of his temper, he could exercise his revenge.

Unhappily,

Unhappily, too much regulated in his administration by the cruel maxims and bloody examples of the fourth Ivan, his reign is sullied by the execution of many innocent victims; while, to eradicate treason, he often employed the axe where his best instrument would have been forgiveness.

After the untimely death of the heroic ²⁵ Le Fort, who alone undertook the dangerous office of curbing the fury of his passions, the sallies of his rage became so instantaneous and terrible, that his courtiers and favourites might be justified perhaps in following the sceptical conduct of the Persian nobleman Rustan Kan, who never departed from the presence of his dread sovereign, without assuring himself in his glass, when he returned to his home, that his head was still left on his shoulders ²⁶; yet, when the calmer moments of reflection succeeded, the repentant monarch would then break out into this sincere acknowledgment of his imperfections,

²⁵ “ Le Fort étoit le seul de ses favoris qui avoit alors le pouvoir ou le courage de l’arrêter et de lui reprocher avec force ses violences.” Lacombe, p. 362, 363.

²⁶ “ Toutes les fois,” said this young courtier to that instructive traveller Sir John de Chardin, “ que je fors de devant le roi, je tâte si j’ai encore la tête sur les épaules, et j’y regarde même dans le miroir, dèsque je suis revenu au logis.” See Chardin, *Voyages en Perse, et autres Lieux de l’Orient*. Amst. 1711; tom. ii. chap. ii. De la nature du Gouvernement, p. 211.

“ Alas,

“ Alas, I have reformed an empire, yet the more arduous task of my own reformation still remains incomplete ”!

The effects of these ebullitions of his temper, however formidable they were, still only reached a small number of his subjects, who found perhaps some compensation for all their dangers in high and lucrative employments ; while the millions of an immense empire still lived in happy obscurity, to enjoy the fruits of his multifarious labours ; and ages yet unborn shall applaud the deliverer of Russia, whose untutored wisdom could burst the chains of ignorance, and breathe into his subjects that happy spirit of union and improvement which gradually led them to the love and cultivation of every civilized virtue !

²⁷ “ Helas, j’aurai pû reformer ma nation, et je ne pourrai me reformer moi-même ? ” Lacombe, p. 363. See also *Lettres du P. R. de Prusse, et de M. De Voltaire*, tom. lxxxiv. p. 254, 255.

I N D E X.

ABDEL Atif, nominated by Ivan III. to the government of Kazan, 133.

Alexander, seated by his father on the throne of Novgorod, 95; distributes appanages to the princes of his blood, *ibid.*; obtains a decisive victory over the German merchants settled on the mouth of the Dwina, 103; by his arrogance sinks into disgust, and retires to Vladimir, 104; his return solicited by the Novgorodians, 105; and also by the knights of Livonia, *ibid.*

Alexandrova Slobada, a large mansion erected by Ivan IV. twenty-four miles from the capital, 220.

Alexis, the father of the great Peter, was excommunicated by the patriarch Nikon, 425, note; his despotic behaviour towards ambassadors, 443; his improvements in the army, 451.

Alexis, son of Peter the Great, his degenerate character, 532; Peter repents of the rash sentence of his death, 618.

Ali, wife of Mahmin, works him up to resentment, 134; poisons herself, 143.

Andrew, uncle to Ivan IV. flies to Novgorod, 160; claims to be placed at the head of the councils and armies, *ibid.*; deserts to Ovtchina, 161.

—— **Nagui**, a second false Demetrius, 384; is sanctioned by Sigismund king of Poland, 385; Choniski advances to meet him, and the imperial troops are overthrown, *ibid.*; pursues his destructive course towards Moscow, 386; acknowledged by Marina and her father to be the long-lost Demetrius, 388; consigned to the dagger by Oroussoff a Tatar prince, 389; the throne claimed for his infant son by his mother Marina, he was strangled, and the mother died in prison, 390.

Afrakas taken by Ivan IV. 201; supposed to have been the general staple of Persia, India, and Arabia, *ibid.*

——, attempts of the Russians to colonize the desert of, *ibid.*, note.

Bafmanof killed by the conspirators against the Czar, 376.

Baton, or **Baaty**, his character, 78; success of his great expedition, 79; 600,000 Tatars under his standard, *ibid.*; his death, 107.

Bauer, general, very interesting relation of his origin made known, on his sending for his brother, a miller, to dine with him, 515, note.

Beards, the great opposition of the Russians to the relinquishing them, 587; the greatest beard esteemed the bravest man, *ibid.*

Beds not known in Russia until the time of Peter the Great, 398.

Bell of 288,000 pounds weight in the town of Kremlin, cast by Boris, 296; of 432,000 pounds cast by the Empress Ann, *ibid.*, note.

Biarmians, their territories, 11.

Blude, the treachery of, by which Vladimir takes the town of Kief, 27; for three days receives marks of honour from Vladimir, who then punishes his perfidy with death, 18.

Boats, or *monokyla* of the Russians, 33, note.

Bogdan Belski, account of, 277; enterprizes the subversion of the government of Fedor, *ibid.*; transported to Nigni Novgorod, 278.

Bogdan, the father of the false Demetrius, 312.

Borissova town and fortress erected, 306.

Boris, Fedorovich Goudonouf, account of, 279; his immense riches, 281; is elected to succeed Fedor, 292; an example of the severity of his justice, *ibid.*; refuses the rank, and demands a new election, which again devolves on him, 293; yields himself to accept the throne, *ibid.*; marches against the Crimean khan, who submits on his approach, 294; pompous display of his forces to the Tatars, 295; he returns to Moscow as a conqueror, *ibid.*; at his inauguration declares that none of his subjects should want, and makes a vow of abolishing all capital punishments, 296; his superstition, to which his only son fell a sacrifice, *ibid.*; his letter of thanks to queen Elizabeth for her offer of sending over a young lady to match with some of his family, 298, note; procures mathematicians, officers, physicians, and apothecaries, from Germany and England, 299; sends sixteen youths of noble origin to different countries for improvement, and advantages derived therefrom, 300; his magnificence at receiving the brother of the king of Denmark, 301; the death of the Danish prince, *ibid.*; dreadful effects of famine, *ibid.*; bands of robbers defeat the army sent against them, 303; are afterwards defeated, 304; he introduces German officers into his army, 305; his private malice and public oppression, 307; his hatred to the house of Romanof, 309; his alarm respecting the false Demetrius, 333; offers large sums of money for his apprehension alive or dead, *ibid.*; refuses the offer of assistance from the king of Sweden, 335; prohibits all communication with Poland, 336; lays the life and adventures of Demetrius the false before the king of Poland, *ibid.*; he heads his army, and obtains a decisive victory over Demetrius, 340; attacks Rylsk, but obliged to abandon the siege, 342; besieges Kromy, in which he was defeated, 343; his death, 346; is succeeded by his son Fedor, *ibid.*

Battle, the success of the, in extracting secrets, 607, note.

Bourgai, or *Biraki*, brother of Batou, imposes a general tribute on Russia, 107.

Cabot, Sebastian, his voyage for discoveries, 257.

Carlisle, earl, his embassy to Russia, 446; dispute with the priest as on entering Moscow, *ibid.*, note; his reception, 447; his palace a prison, *ibid.*; his public audience, 448.

Catharine, Empress of Russia, her adventurous firmness, 520; persuades Peter to sue for peace to the Turks, 521; compared with Theodora, the colleague of Justinian, 538; anecdote of her and Lord Whitworth, 539, note; her coronation, 540; her mean extraction, 542; her attachment

attachment to her chamberlain Moëns, 543; is discovered by Peter, *ibid.*; her fortitude on seeing the head of Moëns on the gallows, 548; her grief on the death of Peter, 550; the report of her having poisoned Peter supposed to be unfounded, 551; her various employments, 604; good conduct on the loss of her son, 619; discovery of her brother, to whom she is introduced by the Czar, 644.

Chancellor, Richard, his voyage for discoveries, 258; winters at Archangel, and visits Moscow, *ibid.*; his audience with Ivan IV. 259; the dinner described, 260.

Charles IX. of Sweden offers to assist the Czar Boris against the false Demetrius, which is refused, 335.

—— *XII.* defeats the Russians at Narva, 506; is totally defeated at Pultowa, 509; is wounded in the leg, 510; and is shot at the siege of Frederichshall, 533.

China, commerce of, with Russia, 573.

Chouiski, ordered to Vladimir, soon returns, and assumes the pomp of his lawful sovereign, 162; condemned to the block, 168.

—— called to the throne of Russia, 383; sacrifices Elias Vassilief, a pretender to the crown, 384; his troops overthrown by Andrew Nagui, a second false Demetrius, 385; thrust into a monastery, where he languished out his days, 388.

Christianity, the introduction of, into Russia, 32; Oskold baptized, 35; Olga baptized by the name of the Empress Helena, 37; on the death of Olga, Christianity declines, 38; final establishment of, in Russia, 39; the commencement of Russian civilization, 49.

Corsairs, or Varagians, 7.

Courts, the arts of, described by Dr. Young, 158, note.

Cowper, his poem of the Task exhibits some passages of the doubtful and inconsistent opinions of the ancient philosophers respecting a future state, and the existence of the Supreme Being, 48, note.

Crim, khan of, enters Russia with 60,000 men, 202; punished for his presumption, *ibid.*

Czar, origin of that title, 153; the first application of that title in Russia to Vassili, *ibid.*, note.

Czarina, Czarovitz, Czarrono, preferred to Tzaritza, Tzarerevitch, and Tzarevna, 170, note.

Danish prince visits Boris, by whom he is magnificently received, 301; his death, *ibid.*

Debric Ali appointed to reign at Astrakan, 202.

Debtors, their punishment in Russia, 415.

Demetrius, his noble defence of Kief, 98.

——, prince, his death, 139.

——, brother of Fedor, account of, 277; becomes the object of hatred of Boris, 280; is assassinated, 287.

—— *Czarovitz*, the several accounts of his death, 310.

——, the false, the revolution of, 312; the son of Bogdan, baptized by the name of James, 313; sent to Moscow for education, *ibid.*; took the monastic habit at the age of fourteen, and called Gregory, or Griska, *ibid.*; employed by the patriarch Job in transcribing books, 314; bore a strong resemblance of the Czarovitz Demetrius, *ibid.*; announces himself the long-lost prince Demetrius, 315; sent by Boris to a distant monastery, 316; goes into Poland, 317; his

his person described, 328; acquires the favour and esteem of prince Vassili Ostrojski, who soon abandons him, *ibid.*; strips off his monastic attire, 319; introduced to prince Adam Wiefnowitki, who places him amongst his domestics under a feigned name, *ibid.*; declares himself to his confessor to be the real Demetrius, 325; produces a diamond cross, which he says was given him at his baptism by prince Mstislavski, 327; pursues the elegancies of literature, *ibid.*; makes proposals of marriage to Marina, daughter of George Mniszek, palatine of Sendomir, which was accepted, but postponed, 328; declares his sufferings in the Diet of Poland, 330; his supposed contract with the king of Poland, 331; large sums offered by Boris for his apprehension alive or dead, 334; the Czar lays open his life and adventures before the king of Poland, 337; the messengers are put to death, *ibid.*; is supported by prince Ostrojski, *ibid.*; exertions of the Palatine and Polish nobles in his favour, 338; the Cossacks of the Don tender their homage, *ibid.*; advances with 4000 Poles, and takes Thernigof and seven other cities, 339; his army being swelled by adventurers, he appears under the walls of Novgorod-Severski, 340; Boris takes the field, and after a severe engagement gains a decisive victory, *ibid.*; obliges the army of the Czar to raise the siege of Kromy, 343; is excommunicated by the patriarch, 344; after the death of Boris, several cities acknowledge him, and Bosmanof himself revolted to him, and the two princes Golitzin followed the example, 347; appears to his new army, 348; his prayer before his army before the commencement of a battle, 349, note; assumes the aspect of mercy to the conquered towns, 350; his character, *ibid.*, note; sends two traitors to obtain information of the state of the inhabitants of Moscow, *ibid.*; the agents cried, "long live the Czar Demetrius," and seized the widow of the Czar with her son, 352; the submission of Moscow, *ibid.*; consigns to death the Czar Fedor with his mother, 353; removes the patriarch, 356; his solemn entry into Moscow, 357; the salutation of the servile Russians on his entry into Moscow, *ibid.*, note; appoints the archbishop of Rezan patriarch, 358; receives the crown from the patriarch, *ibid.*; sends for the widow of Ivan from her long confinement, *ibid.*; account of their joyful meeting, 360; his merciful conduct to prince Vassili Ivanovitz Chouiski, 361; sends Vlassief his ambassador to Poland, 362; demands the daughter of the Palatine of Sendomir in marriage, 364; jewels to the value of 200,000 ducats served up instead of fruit on his marriage, *ibid.*, note; the splendour displayed by the inhabitants of Moscow on the arrival of Marina, 365; discontent on his father-in-law bringing 4000 Poles with him to Moscow, 366; other discontents for his polished gallantry, *ibid.*; Sigismund sends to demand Smolinsk, and assistance against the Tatars of Krim; the first denied, the latter granted, 367; his attempt to cultivate the minds of the people produces a general indignation, 368; in the marriage ceremony, places the crown of the Czar on the head of Marina, 369; Strelitzes form a conspiracy against him, and their execution, 370; the plot of Chouiski, 371; charge against him from the manner of mounting his horse, 374, note; to avoid the conspirators, he throws himself out of a window forty feet high, 376; declared to be an impostor by the dowager Czarina, is put to death by the soldiers, 379; his virtues,

virtues, 380; the doubtful obscurity of his real parentage, *ibid.*; Mr. Coxe's opinion that he was not an impostor, 38a, note.

Demetrius, a second false, in Andrew Nagui, 384; is sanctioned by Sigismund king of Poland, 385; Chouiski advances to meet him, and the imperial troops are overthrown, *ibid.*; pursues his destructive course towards Moscow, 386; is acknowledged by Marina and her father to be the lost Demetrius, 388; is consigned to the dagger by Ourouloff, a Tatar prince, 389; the throne claimed for his infant son by Marina his mother, he was strangled, and the mother died in prison, 390.

——, a fourth, claims the crown of Russia, 389; is executed on a tree, 390.

Donosfur, the metropolitan, his mild temper, 382; with two other bishops, reduced to the state of monks, and inclosed in different monasteries, 385.

Earthquakes in Russia, 76.

Elephants, the teeth of, found in Siberia, 251.

Elias Vassilief alleges his pretensions to the crown of Russia, and takes the name of Peter, 383; is sacrificed to the just vengeance of Chouiski, 384.

Elizabeth, queen, letter to Ivan IV. of Russia, offering an asylum to himself and family, 231, note; strengthened her interest with Russia, by sending Dr. Jacobs, an eminent physician, 248, note.

Emorguesi pretends submission to the Czar, 169; robs and insults his ambassadors, *ibid.*; his multiform iniquities, 200; flies into Siberia, 201.

English-Russian Company established, 263; the trade lost to the Dutch on the death of Charles I. *ibid.*, note.

Famine, dreadful effects of, in Russia, 301; 600,000 lives swept away in Moscow alone, 305; means taken to prevent such visitations in future, 306; horrible in Russia, 391; loaf of bread sold for 5000 sterling, 392, note.

Fedor, son of Ivan IV. quietly seated on the throne of Russia, 275; his imbecile constitution, 276; three boyars nominated by his father to direct his councils, *ibid.*; Bogdan Belski enterprizes the subversion of his government, 277; his death, being the last of the house of Rurik, supposed by poison, 289; his character, *ibid.*; the Czarina renounces the crown, and retires to a convent in Moscow, 290.

——, son of Boris, succeeds to the throne at the age of sixteen years, 346; seized with his mother by the agents of Demetrius the false, 352; he and also his mother are strangled, 355.

Fire-arms first introduced into Russia, 131.

Fox, black, skin sold for 80 roubles, 449, note.

Furs of Siberia, 251; of Russia, 265.

German merchants driven to the mouth of the Dwina, and settle there, 102; establish knights of the Teutonic order, *ibid.*; demand succours of Denmark and Sweden; the latter sends an army under

- Birger, brother of the king, 102; send to Novgorod to demand submission, 103; two victories over them by Alexander, 105.
- Golden Horde*, account of, 108; annihilated, 123.
- Goltzmin*, the able adviser of Sophia, 468; his want of military talents, 470; is arrested, and stripped of his dignities and banished, 475; his death in 1713, 476, note.
- Grand Duke*, improperly substituted for Veliki-Knez, or Grand Prince, 79, note.
- Gregory*, see Demetrius the false.
- Gustavus Vasa*, of Sweden, breaks the peace with the Czar, 204; attacks the city of Orescheck, which he was obliged to abandon, *ibid.*; letter of Namestnick to him, 206; victory of Paletskoi over him, 207; makes peace with the Czar, *ibid.*
- Helena*, wife of Vassili IV. account of, and character, 154; holds the reins of government for her son Ivan IV. 156; indulges in love with Outchina, 156; gives way to revenge, *ibid.*; her death by poison, 161.
- Honour*, in Russia, the word *ichest* fully displays the meaning, 397, note.
- Horses* of Russia, 419.
- Horsemanship* of the Tatars, 58, note.
- Jacob*, on being punished with the knout, deserts from Peter into Azof, 486; on the capture of Azof, is given up to Peter, 488; account of his execution, 490; account of him, with his character, *ibid.*
- , Dr. an eminent physician, sent by queen Elizabeth into Russia, 248, note.
- Jacob Feodorovitch Dolgoroukof*, prince, after tearing an ukase signed by Peter, on shewing the cause and bad effects of it, is forgiven by the Czar, 615; his conduct by which he got the better of the grief of Peter on the loss of his second son, 619.
- Idgur*, son of Kazim, seated on the throne of Kazan, 189.
- Jesuits*, expulsion of, from Russia, 570, note.
- Jewels* of the value of 200,000 ducats served up instead of fruit, on the marriage of the false Demetrius, 364, note.
- Jews*, Peter the Great's opinion of the Jews being inferior to Russians in commerce, 255.
- Intoxication* of the ancient Scythians, 180, note.
- Ivan III. Vassiliévitch*, state of Russia under, 110; his clear and decisive judgment, *ibid.*; his first effort to recover Kazan, 112; entrusts the command to the Tatar prince Kassim, 113; destroys the country of the Tcheremisses, 114; bestows the command on his brothers Andrew and Boris, *ibid.*; besieges and takes Kazan, 115; opposes and subdues a rebellion raised by Marpha, 120; executes ambassadors sent from Achmet Khan, 123; defeats the Tatars in two attempts on Russia, 124—126; plot against his life by Loukoinski, a Polish prince, which is discovered, and the prince burnt in an iron cage, 128; makes a ten years' war, which proves fatal to Poland, *ibid.*; obtains the principality of Iver, *ibid.*; subdues the rebellion of Mickhail, 129; attacks the territories of Kazan, 130; marches against Mahmet Amin, 136; his death and character, *ib.* 137.
- Ivan

Ivan IV. succeeds his father on the throne of Russia, 155; opposed by his uncle George, who, not being supported, dies in a prison, *ibid.*; seized upon by the princes, 161; his attempts to regain his power, *ibid.*; grasps the sceptre at the age of fourteen, 166; his speech to his nobles on that occasion, *ibid.*; his savage and inexorable passions, 168; his marriage and coronation, 170; the wisdom and prudence of his wife produce in him a happy reformation, *ibid.*; introduces a standing force into Russia, 174; the former state of the Russian force, 175; forms the celebrated militia of Strelitzes, 177; the Kazanites reclaim the protection of the Czar, 178; totally defeats the Kazanites, 181; besieges Kazan ineffectually for three months, 182; builds a small city within five leagues of Kazan, 183; defeats the Tatars, 186; bent on the destruction of Kazan, 189; account of the dreadful siege and destruction of that city, *ibid.*—209; said to have wept over the destruction of Kazan, 190—198; sends ambassadors to receive the oaths of Emorguei, who are robbed and insulted by him, 199; marches 40,000 men against Astrakan, which he takes, 200; drives the Swedes from the siege of Orecheck, 204; directs his hostile steps against Finland, 205; makes peace with the Swedes, 206; demands a dormant tribute of fifty years from the Livonians, 207; which being denied, he invades Livonia, 208; peace with the Livonians agreed on, 209; recommencement of hostilities, 210; Dorpt and thirty other strong places taken in one year, 213; wages war with Poland, 214; takes Felling, *ibid.*; becomes master of the greatest part of Livonia, 214; enters Lithuania, and takes Polotsk, and all the monks and Jews massacred, 215; a decisive victory gained over one of his armies, and another retreats, 216; many of his nobles fly into Poland, 217; declares that he resolved to give up the cares of royalty, and his whole authority to devolve on Idigur, or Semen, the khan of Kazan, 218; is wished to keep the reins of administration, 219; resigns the name of Czar, and assumes the rank of Grand Prince, *ibid.*; erects a vast mansion twenty-four miles from the capital, 220; publicly remounts the throne, 221; defeats the design of the Sultan Selim in joining the Don to the Volga, 222; obliges him to raise the siege of Astrakan, 223; nearly the whole of Selim's army lost by fatigue, famine, and tempest, 224; his barbarities at Novgorod, with the destruction of it, 225; departs to Alexandrova Sloboda, 226; his exclamation to the archbishop, 227; the archbishop arrested, and the Czar and his son assist in the general carnage, 228; his sacking and massacres at Novgorod to the number of 25,000 men, *ibid.*; Pleskof submits, and sentenced to general confiscation, and the execution of a few monks, 229; Iver suffers the calamities of Novgorod, *ibid.*; orders men and women to be tied to spits and roasted alive, and commits other shameful enormities, 230; Queen Elizabeth's letter to him, offering an asylum to himself and family, 231, note; Russia invaded by the Crimean Tatars, who burn Moscow, when an 100,000 persons were supposed to have perished by the fire and sword, 232; cuts off the ears, noses, and lips of the ambassadors of the khan, sent to demand a tribute, 234; makes a precipitate flight to Novgorod, 235; the Tatars routed by Mikhail Vorotinski, *ibid.*; makes peace with the Tatars, and a truce for three years with Poland, *ibid.*; the king of

Poland claims the conquests made by Ivan in Lithuania, 236; Ivan claims Courland of the king of Poland, *ibid.*; sends a deputy from the king of Poland to prison, *ibid.*; Polotsk retaken by the king of Poland, 237; Kexholm taken by the Swedes, *ibid.*; sends a special messenger to pope Gregory XIII. who sends the Jesuit Possevin, 238; Possevin's pompous reception, 239; Narva, Ivan-Gorod, and Vittenstein, taken by the Swedes, 240; makes peace with the king of Poland, *ibid.*; and also with the Crimean khan, 241; and a truce for three years with the Swedes, *ibid.*; gave a death blow to his beloved son, 242; receives a deputation requesting him to place his son at the head of the army, 242; the abettors of this advice put to death, *ibid.*; speech of, on offering to divest himself of the crown and robe, *ibid.*; relation of the story of his giving the death-blow to his son, 243; account of this affair by different writers, 246; becomes tormented with the stings of a guilty conscience, *ibid.*; his death and character, 247; the conquest of Siberia; and the advantages derived therefrom, 251; his code of laws, called Soudebnik, or the manuel of judges, 253; objections to his code, *ibid.*; some parts commended, 254; improved state of commerce in his reign, 257; account of his giving an audience to captain Chancellour, 259; extended his dominions over Kazan and Astrakan, 264; the encouragement he gave to the progress of literature, 267; introduces the art of printing, 268; state of his superstition, 270; exclamation of his nobles on receiving punishments, 273, note; reported to have died by poison, 278.

Ivan, son of Ivan IV. account of his death as given by different writers, 244.

—, (the brother of Fedor,) his younger brother Peter said to have been called to the supreme authority by the deceased Czar, 457; report of his being strangled unfounded, 460; Ivan and Peter both crowned, 462; his incapacity, 463; his marriage with Prascovia, *ibid.*; resigns his claims to the crown to Peter, 476; his death and character, 477.

— *Federovitz Mskislavski*, account of, 277; arrested and sent to the monastery of Bielozoro, 282.

— *Kbovanski*, appointed commander of the army by Sophia, 460; his ingratitude, 465; his designs to massacre the Czar, &c. *ibid.*; him and his are captured and executed, 467; his supporters submit to public justice, *ibid.*; many saved through the intercession of the patriarch, 468.

— *Petrovitz Chouiski*, account of, 277; charged with treason, 284; though not convicted, was doomed to perpetual banishment, 285; strangled by the minions of Boris, *ibid.*

Kazan, Ivan III. attempts to recover, 112; siege of, 114; taken, *ib.* again attacked by Ivan III. 131; Mahmet Amin appointed to the throne of, 132; his oppressive government, 133; Manouk elected by the people, *ibid.*; Abdel Atif nominated by Ivan, *ibid.*; Mahmet Amin nominated by Ivan, 134; account of the dreadful siege, and destruction of, 190—198.

Khopko, chief of a band of robbers, defeats the force sent against him, 304; his character, *ibid.*; is defeated, 305.

Kief,

Kief, prince of, defends himself bravely, 72; obtains pardon and peace from the Tatars, but is butchered by the Tatars, *ibid.* 73; attacked, and finally taken by the Tatars, 98; the noble defence of, by Demetrius, *ibid.*

Knights of the Teutonic order, the form of admission, 102.

Kolonna taken by the Tatars, 82.

Kummis, a liquor of the Tatars, prepared from mare's milk, 56.

Kopecks, equal to silver pennies, 193, note.

Konefsk, the skilful and vigorous defence of that town, 93.

Le Fort, the companion of Peter in his youthful sports, 478; marries a youthful lady of rank and fortune, *ibid.* note; his premature death, 585.

Leignitz, memorable battle of, 106.

Louis XIV. compared with Peter the Great, 628.

Liberty, definition of, by Justinian, by Blackstone, and by Paley, 10; by Rousseau, 14.

Livonia invaded by the Russians, 208; peace agreed on, 209; recommencement of hostilities, 210.

Loukouski, prince, his plot on the life of Ivan III. discovered, burns in an iron cage, 127.

Mahmet Amin appointed to the throne of Kazan, 132; his oppressive government, 133; is expelled from the government, *ibid.*; again nominated, 134; at the instigation of his wife Ali, murders all the Russian merchants, *ibid.*; rushes into the southern provinces, 135; marches against Nigni Novgorod, *ibid.*; raises the siege, 137; defeats the Russians at Kazan, and afterwards defeated himself, 140; his death and character, 143; Sheikh Ali his successor, 144.

Manouk elected by the people to the government of Kazan, 133.

Marpba, account of her, 116; raises a party against Ivan III. 117; purposes to deliver the republic of Novgorod into the hands of the king of Poland, *ibid.*; raises a rebellion, but is subdued by Ivan, 119.

Marriage, custom for the bride to pull off the boots of her husband, 26, note.

Mayerberg, ambassador from Leopold, the suspicious behaviour of the Russians to him, 442.

Mensius, a Scotchman, appointed preceptor to Peter the Great, 464, note.

Menchikoff, prince, account of him, 492; his low origin, 493; is first noticed by Peter, *ibid.*; soon obtains the rank of general and minister, 494; his avarice and oppression, *ibid.*; the vanquished Swedes, after the battle of Pultowa, surrender to him, 515; is fined, 200,000 rubles for his avarice, 554.

Michael Fedorovitch, a youth of sixteen, called to ascend the throne of Russia, 393; from whom Peter the Great descended, 394.

Mikhail, his rebellion against Ivan III. 128; sues for peace, which is refused, 129; deserted by his troops, flies into Lithuania, *ib.*

Mikhail, Prince of Kief, assassinates the deputies sent from the Tatars, 97; deserts his capital, *ibid.*

Mines, iron, of Russia, 266.

Moens, his criminal connection with Catharine discovered by Peter, 543; his execution, 547.

Moscow burnt by the Tatars, and 100,000 men supposed to have perished by the fire and sword, 27; arises from her ruins with additional splendour, 234; foundation cast in 1157, 83, note; the improved police of, 441.

Mislislaf, prince of Galitch, joins the Russians against the Tatars, 67; abandons his station in a dishonourable manner, 71.

Narva, battle, defeat of Peter by the Swedes, 506.

Natalia, sister of Peter the Great, composes many tragedies and comedies, 599.

Nikite Romonovitz Turief, account of, 277; his death, 282.

Novgorod, the new capital of the Sclavonians, 4; its intercourse with the merchants of Constantinople, *ibid.*; extent from which it received tributary offerings, 5; character of the inhabitants, *ibid.*, 6; fortified and made the residence of Rurik, 17; falls into gradual decay and weakness, 122.

Oby, son of Sviatoflaf, his wanton cruelties, 23; pressed to death and forced into the river, *ibid.*

Olga, retrospective view of her reign, 36; baptised by the name of the Empress Helena, 37; an encourager of institutions of public utility, 38.

Orebeck attacked by Gustavus Vasa, but the siege abandoned, 204.

Ostold, retrospective view of the reign of, 33; his attempt on Constantinople, *ibid.*; is baptised, 35.

Otropief, see Demetrius the false.

Ovchina, the favourite of the Empress Helena, 157; cut to pieces by the common hangman, 161.

Paganism, the extirpation of, from Russia, 39.

Peter the Great, in order to subdue the groveling disposition of the Russians, ordered those who fell on their knees when he passed to be punished with the knout, 273, note; his liberality of manners, 444; his accession, 456; his character, *ibid.*; Ivan raised to the throne, and intreats Peter to be joined with him; are both crowned, 462; plunges himself into a dissolute course of amusements, 463; his mind glows with ambition, 469; becomes exasperated against his sister Sophia, 471; abruptly retires to Kolomna, *ibid.*; Sophia directs the Strelitzes against him, 472; retires to the fortified monastery of the Holy Trinity, *ibid.*; one regiment of the Strelitzes hasten to his protection, 474; Scheglovitof and some of his accomplices beheaded, and others had their tongues cut out and banished to Siberia, 476; goes to the capital, *ibid.*; Ivan resigns to him his claim to the crown, *ibid.*; his youthful sports, 477; promotes the military art in the character of drummer, 479; is advanced, by regular process, to a lieutenantancy, 480; his small cohort increases to two regiments of Preobrajenski and Semenovski, *ibid.*; constructs a fort, in the attack and defence of which much blood was shed, *ibid.*, note; proceeds to the study of navigation, 481; makes a voyage to Archangel, 482; advantages

advantages to his country from his naval pursuits, 484; engages in the field of war, but is defeated in his first attempt, in attacking Azof, *ibid.*; takes two forts, 485; again proceeds against Azof, and again obliged to raise the siege, *ibid.*; rapid increase of the navy, 487, note; Azof again besieged, and the garrison and inhabitants permitted to abandon it, 488; makes a triumphal entry into Moscow, 489; a medal struck on this occasion, *ibid.*, note; orders his wife, the daughter of Fedor Sopoukhin, to retire into a monastery, 491; forms a plan of visiting foreign nations, but is prevented, 494; a conspiracy formed against him, 496; the design revealed to him, *ibid.*; enters the house where the conspirators were assembled, with a page only, and secures them, 498; their execution, 500; his great presence of mind in the moment of the greatest danger, *ibid.*, note; attacked by eight robbers, having only two pages with him, takes one of them who impeaches the rest, *ibid.*, note; leaving the reins of government in the hands of the boyar Strechnief, visits the courts of Europe, 501; during his absence a new rebellion bursts forth, but Gordon suppresses it, 503; returns to Moscow, executes 2000 of the Strelitzes, and abolishes their name and power, 504; this rebellion ascribed to Sophia, 505; takes the field against Charles XII., 506; 34,000 Russians defeated by 9000 Swedes, at Narva, *ibid.*; lays the foundation of Petersburg, 508; defeats the Swedes at Pultowa, 509; is shot through the hat, 512; his war with the Turks, but is obliged to sue for peace, 519; the principal terms of the peace, 522; the conquest of Finland, 523; defeat of the Swedish fleet, 524; his amazing fortitude during a tempest, 527; his discourse to the people on the triumph for the victory over the Swedish fleet, 530; orders the death of his son Alexis, 532; again makes war with the Swedes, 533; Charles shot at the siege of Fredericshall, *ibid.*; concludes peace with the Swedes, 534; Povelitel, or emperor and father of his country, conferred on him by the senate, and also the title of the Great, 536; takes Derbent, 537; manifesto for the coronation of Catharine, 541, note; discovers her infidelity, 544; his conduct on the trying occasion, *ibid.*; conducts Catharine to the gallows, to which the head of Moëns was fixed, 547; his last illness brought on by attending a ceremony on the ice, of blessing the water, 549; his death, 550; the grief of Catharine on his death, *ibid.*; the report of his having been poisoned by Catharine unfounded, 551; his character, 552; his reform of the boyarskoidvoi, 553; gives salaries to the judges, 554; intended to form a new fabric of jurisprudence, 555; reform in the collection of the revenues, 556; establishes a poll-tax, 557; reformation of his army, 558; improves the state of naval tactics, 561; lays the foundation of Peterburg, *ibid.*; institutes a school of marine, 562; his design to abolish the office of patriarch, *ibid.*; his reform of the monasteries, 566; his encouragement of industry, 567; introduces toleration, 570; is styled Antichrist, 571; is assisted in the reformation of the church by Theophanes archbishop of Novgorod, 572; his encouragement of commerce, *ibid.*; extends commerce with England, Holland, and France, 576; also to Persia, 577; improvement of inland navigation, 578; in order to complete his designs, he became the artificer as well as projector, 580; his attention to the improvement of the roads, 581; institutes

institutes regular posts, 582 ; establishes a packet from Petersburg to Lubeck, 583 ; also a uniformity of weights and measures, *ibid.* ; erects a tribunal of commerce, 584 ; institutes the order of St. Andrew, 585 ; obliges his subjects to relinquish their beards and to assume the European habit, 586 ; espouses the rights of women, 588 ; strikes Mentchikoff, for not having laid aside his sword in a dance, 589 ; reform of the calendar, adopting the Julian, 590 ; his attention to the fabrication of arms and anchors, 591 ; his manual labour at the lime and tile-kiln, 592 ; institutes a college of mines, *ibid.* ; his attention to the manufacture of wool, linen, and silk, 593 ; provides printing-houses, *ibid.* ; establishes the academy of sciences, 594 ; improves the arts and sciences, *ibid.* ; augments his library and museum, *ibid.* ; improvement in the knowledge of astronomy, 596 ; proclaims the precise day of an eclipse, 597 ; makes a progress in learning the road to offices of trust and dignity, 598 ; his establishment of schools, *ibid.* ; opens a national theatre at Moscow, 599 ; his attention to the police of Petersburg, 600 ; an inexorable enemy to gaming, *ibid.* ; confines the luxury of dress, *ibid.* ; founds and endows two hospitals for soldiers and sailors, a foundling hospital, a college of physicians and a grand dispensary, *ibid.* ; his character summed up by the king of Prussia, 601, note ; his private life, 602 ; a cottage his residence when he cast the foundation of Petersburg, 603 ; the varied employment of his time, 604 ; his plain diet, 605 ; his royal economy, *ibid.*, note ; the singularity of his first audience to ambassadors, 608 ; his passion for making all his nobles sailors ridiculed by Algarotti, 609, note ; attended incog. as a common pilot, *ibid.*, note ; in an aquatic expedition with the ambassadors, is overtaken by a violent storm, 610 ; chastises Desfere for a bridge being out of order over which they were to pass, 611 ; strikes Le Blond the architect, which so much affected him as to bring on his death, 612 ; inquiries of an ambassador whether he was not called a tyrant in other countries, 613 ; his conduct to prince Jacob Feodovitz Dolgoroukof, for tearing a ukase which had been signed by him, 615 ; his grief, on the loss of his son by Catharine, constrains him to repent of his rash sentence of Alexes, 618 ; his attempt to drown a senator, 621 ; his aversion to superstition, discovers the fraud of the Virgin's miraculous tears, 622 ; refuses, in an illness, to pardon robbers and murderers, as had been the custom, 623 ; his conduct to an unfortunate female, 624 ; never punished offences against chastity, *ibid.* ; averse to detraction, 627 ; his opinion respecting contraband trade, *ibid.* ; compared with Louis XIV., 628 ; his strict economy, 630 ; his politic liberality in bestowing vacant lands, *ibid.* ; frequently stood godfather to the children of his subjects, 632 ; his inattention to dress, *ibid.* ; works at an iron forge, and receives the usual wages, 633 ; indifferent to the chace, 635 ; his attention to projectors, 636 ; works as a ship-carpenter in Holland, 637 ; studies surgery, *ibid.* ; and the office of dentist, 640 ; his literary pursuits, 642 ; his discovery of the brother of Catharine, 645 ; his person described, 650 ; his character summed up, *ibid.* ; his remarkable exclamation, " Alas, I have reformed an empire, yet the more arduous task of my own reformation still remains incomplete !" 656.

Peterburg,

- Peterburg*, foundation laid by Peter the Great, 508, 562; as yet only a part of an immense outline, 508, note; progress of commerce, 576.
- Plague* in Russia, 77; on the causes of, 124.
- Pogarski*, of Kazan, a deliverer of Russia, 391.
- Poland*, a nine years' war with Russia, 143.
- Poles*, their cruel conduct at Moscow, 370; driven from Moscow, 393.
- Polovtsi*, nation of, 63; gained over by presents and promises, observe a neutrality between the Russians and Tatars, *ibid.*; after the Alains had been disabled, the Tatars attack the Polovtsi, 65; implore the alliance of the Russians, *ibid.*
- Polovtsian* prince is baptised, 66.
- Possévin*, the Jesuit, sent by pope Gregory XIII. into Russia, 238; his pompous reception, 239.
- Printing*, the introduction and progress of, in Russia, 268; improved state of, in Russia, 594.
- Priklad*, the various offices of the, 446; dispute with the Earl of Carlisle, *ibid.*, note.
- Pultowa* battle, in which the Swedes are defeated, 509.
- Rapina*, prince, his advice to Peter on discovering the infidelity of Catharine, 544.
- Republic*, Plato's opinion that it should not seek commercial intercourse or naval power, 408, note.
- Renan*, archbishop of, appointed patriarch, his character, 357.
- Riazan*, city of, a tenth of their wealth demanded by the Tatars, 80; invested and taken by the Tatars, 81; all the inhabitants put to the sword and the city razed, 82; Yury sends assistance too late, *ibid.*
- Romanof*, the hatred of Boris to the house of, 309; the false charges brought against them, and the dreadful punishments inflicted on them, 310; the establishment of the house of, 380.
- Roussalki*, the inferior gods of the woods and waters, 31, note.
- Rurik*, leader of the Varagians or Corsairs, 8; founder of a dynasty, which continued 700 years, 9; defeats and kills Vadime the Valiant, 14; massacre of the vanquished, 15; his increased dominion by the death of his two brothers, 16; assigns some cities to his chiefs, *ibid.*; fortifies Novgorod and resides there, 17; rebellion of the Varagian chiefs under Ostold and Dir, 18; prevents any dangerous consequences arising from their revolt, 19; his death, *ibid.*; character, 20.
- Russia*, the origin of the empire of, 3; cruelty in their human sacrifices, 32; introduction of Christianity, *ibid.*; the conquest of Russia by the Tatars, 53; state of, prior to the first incursion of the Tatars, 59; events which introduced the Russians to the Tatars, 61; joined by the Polovtsi, 65; also by Mstislaf prince of Galitch, 68; the Tatars are repulsed, 69; the Russians routed, 71; 90,000 killed, *ibid.*; Riazan, Kolomna, and Moscow, taken by the Tatars, 84—89; the second Tatar invasion, 96; Périesslave and Thernigof taken by the Tatars, *ibid.*; also Galitch and Vladimir of Volynia taken, 100; a general tribute imposed by Bourgai, brother of Batou, 107; state of, under Ivan III., Vassilievitz, 110; several towns re-united to Russia, by

by the army of Novgorod, 129; principality of Iver obtained, *ibid.*; cannon and muskets first introduced into, 131; the rebellion of Mahmet Amin, 135; a nine years' war with Poland, 143; advantages derived to, from the conquest of Siberia, 251; improved commerce of, 255; audience given to R. Chancellour by the Czar, with a description of the dinner on that occasion, 261; commodities of commerce, 264; mines of, 266; wretched state of the arts and literature, 267; the introduction and progress of the art of printing, 268; the ignorance of the clergy, 269, note; the grovelling submission of the people, 273, note; dreadful effects of famine, 302; visited by bands of robbers, who are at last destroyed, 303; the crown of, offered to one of the sons of Charles IX. of Sweden, 392; the estates assemble at Moscow, to elect a sovereign, *ibid.*; manners and customs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, 395; daily meetings in the market places to discuss the interests of the state, 396; exclamation at concluding a bargain, "If I keep not my word, may it prove my disgrace!" 397; their edifices, 398; beds not known until the time of Peter the Great, *ibid.*; state of their women, 399; their marriages, 402; burial up to the neck, the punishment for a wife murdering her husband, *ibid.*; men may kill their wives with impunity, 404; fathers may punish their children even to death with impunity, or dispose of them four times, 405; their funerals, *ibid.*; merchandize and commerce, 408; state of agriculture, *ibid.*; a capitation tax imposed, 411; the boors transferred with the land from one proprietor to another, 413; a tribunal established to settle the disputes between masters and servants, *ib.*; laws to regulate apparel, 414; laws respecting debtors and property, *ibid.*, 415; sports and recreations, 417; state of the military art, 418; excellence of their horses for war, 419; their usual food in camp, 420; their clergy considered, 425; their superstition, 426; freedom of public preaching punished, 429; improvement in their buildings, 430; the improved state of their entertainments, 431; their dress, 433; the amazing depredations of gold, jewels, &c. 434; their baths, 435; improved state of the women, 437; case of a husband not being called to account for the murder of his wife, 438, note; despotism of, 441; distrust of strangers, *ibid.*; reception and public audience of ambassadors, 448; improved state of the army under Alexis, 451; the senate or council, 453; progress of improvement under Peter, 552; reform of the boyarskoidvoi, 553; salaries granted to the judges, 554; a new fabric of jurisprudence intended to have been formed, 555; reform in the collection of the revenues, 556; a poll tax established, 557; reform in the army, *ibid.*; improved state of naval tactics, 561; the reform of the church by Peter, 566—572; revolution of commerce in, 572; commerce with China, 573.

Sable, an animal of Siberia, 251, note.

Sapha Guerei succeeds Shiekh Ali in the principality of Kazan, 145; loses the city of Kazan, 149; cuts his way through the Russian army and escapes to Crim, 150; is recalled, 152; breaks his peace with Russia, 164; is expelled from his government, 177; sinks to a private

private station, *ibid.*; again recalled, 180; nearly taken in one of his hunting matches, 181; his forces totally defeated, *ibid.*; killed by a fall from his horse, 182.

Scalvonians original inhabitants of Russia, 4.

Selim II. Sultan of Constantinople, attempts to cut a canal from the Don to the Volga, marches with a large army, but they are defeated in their progress by the Russians, 222; besieges Astrakan, but are obliged to raise the siege, 223; disappointed of assistance from the Tatars, harassed by fatigue and famine, arrives at Azof, when the greatest part of the remains of the army were lost by a tempest, 224.

Sheikh Ali, successor to Mahmet Amin, 143; his disgusting ugliness, 144; a general revolt against him, 145; is succeeded by Sapha Guerei, *ibid.*; emancipated from his bondage, 173; the government again requested for him by the Kazanites, 178; his disgrace, 179; his plans to obtain liberty, *ibid.*; entrusted by Ivan IV. to build a small city near Kazan, 183; the seeming acquiescence of the regent of Kazan to marry him, but sends him poisoned presents, 187; enters Kazan, *ibid.*; hurled from his blood-stained throne, 189.

Shoes, the contest in England, in the time of Rufus, respecting long-pointed shoes, 414, note.

Siberia, the conquest of, by Ivan IV., and the advantages derived therefrom, 250; the productions of, 251.

Sidor, a deacon of a convent in Moscow, claims as a fourth Demetrius, 389; is executed on a tree, 390.

Sigismund king of Poland, his ambition and treachery, 143.

Sinaus, brother of Rurik, 8—10; his death, 16.

Skavronski, Charles, discovered to be the brother of the Empress Catharine, 645; invested with the ribbon of St. Andrew and the title of count, 648.

Skins of Russia, 265.

Slavensk, the principal city of the Scavonians, its existence doubted, 4.

Smirnoi, the uncle of the false Demetrius, 312.

Smolensk assaulted by the Lithuanians, who are repulsed, 101; surrounded with a wall, 306.

Sophia, wife of Ivan III. Vassilievitz, 110, note.

—, sister of Ivan and Peter, espouses the cause of Ivan, and restores him to the throne, 458; differently described and characterised, 459, note; the reins of government committed to her, 462; her image impressed upon the coin, *ibid.*, note; Peter becomes exasperated against her, 472; directs the Strelitzes against Peter, *ibid.*; sets off to visit Peter, but is ordered to return to Moscow, 474; endeavours to escape to Poland, but is arrested and conducted to the Devitchée nunnery, *ibid.*; doomed to perpetual confinement, 475; her character, *ibid.*; her death, 505; translates Moliere's *Medecin malgre-lui*, and composes a tragedy, 599, note.

Stephen Batori, king of Poland, demands the conquests of Ivan IV. in Lithuania and in Livonia, 235; sends a deputy to Ivan, whom he sends to prison, 237; retakes Polotsk, *ibid.*; makes a safe and honourable peace with Russia, 240.

Strelitzes,

Strzhinas, militia, described, 451.

Sviyjsk, city built by Ivan IV. its advantageous position for the conquest of Kazan, 184.

Sviatoglas or Sphendokhlabus, grandson of Rurik, his character, 22 ; the division of his empire to his sons, 23.

Sumber undertakes the regency of Kazan, 182 ; her seeming acquiescence to marry Sheikh Ali, but sends him poisoned presents, 187.

Tatars, motives for adopting this spelling of the word, 53, note ; their conquest of Russia, 53 ; description and character of the, 54 ; their dexterity in archery and horsemanship, in war and hunting, 55—58 ; rich in flocks and herds, 56 ; their diet particularly horse-flesh, 57 ; their idolatry, *ibid.* ; their khan, 58 ; events which introduced the Russians to the Tatars, 61 ; their proceedings against Derbent, 62 ; having gained over the Polovtzi to a neutrality, attack and disable the Alains, proceed against the Polovtzi, 65 ; send an embassy to the Russians who murder the messengers, 67 ; are repulsed by the Russians, 69 ; the Russians routed, 71 ; 90,000 of the Russians killed, 72 ; give no quarter, and ravage the villages, 74 ; their uninterrupted success, 77 ; 600,000 under the standard of Batou, 79 ; invest and take the city of Riazan, 81 ; and also Kolomna, 88 ; take Moscow, 91 ; after a noble resistance, take Torjok, *ibid.* ; proceed towards Novgorod, when they suddenly wheel about and evacuate the Russian empire, 92 ; their second invasion of Russia, 97 ; take Péricaslave and Tchernigof, *ibid.* ; deputies sent to Mikhail prince of Kief, assassinated, 97 ; attack and take Kief, 98 ; also Galitch and Vladimir of Volynia, 100 ; after destructive incursions into Poland, again visit Russia, 106 ; Ackmet Khan sends ambassadors to Ivan III. to demand payment of tribute, who are executed, 123 ; make an attempt to invade Russia, but retreat, 124 ; after three years, make another attempt, in which they also failed, 125 ; increase of their power, 158 ; again invade Russia, 164 ; their designs frustrated, *ib.* ; their conduct during the administration of Helena, 172 ; defeated by Ivan IV., 186 ; prepare to fall on Russia, 204 ; on the approach of Boris, submit to him, *ibid.* ; the pompous display of the Russian force to them, 295.

Tcheremisses, country of, destroyed by Ivan III., 114.

Tebis Ali appointed to the throne of Kazan, 152 ; in a sedition, declared unqualified to reign, *ibid.* ; is massacred, *ibid.*

Temple, Sir William, anecdote of, 607, note.

Teutonic order, knights of that order, the form of admission, 102.

Theodora, the wife of Justinian, compared with Catharine, 538.

Theodofa, the modern Kassa, attacked by Vladimir, 43 ; which he takes and becomes master of the whole Chersonese, 44.

———, daughter of Fidor, her birth, 287 ; joy at her birth, 288 ; her death in the first year of her age, *ibid.*

Theophanes, archbishop of Novgorod, assists Peter in the reform of the church, 572.

Trovor, brother of Rurik, 8—10 ; his death, 16.

Vasine the Valiant, 14; defeated and killed by Rurik, *ibid.*

Varagians, or Corsairs, 7; shake off their allegiance to Rurik, and enter under the banners of Oskold and Dir, 18.

Vassili IV. Ivanovitz, his reign, 139; concludes treaties with Poland and Mildei Guerei khan of the Crim, *ibid.*; marches 100,000 men against Kazan, 140; the successive defeat of both the armies, *ibid.*; marches 150,000 men towards Kazan, but is defeated 146; and a part of his army defeat the Tatars, but afterwards retreat, 147; after six years he again attacks Kazan, and succeeds, 149; grants a peace to the inhabitants of Kazan, 151; his death and character, 152.

— *Ivanovitz Chouiski*, his character, 341; the merciful conduct of the false Demetrius to him, 361; is afterwards convicted of treason, and again his life saved by the intercession of the widow of Ivan, 362; restored to his original honours, *ibid.*

Vladimir, son of Sviatoflaf, opposes and subdues his brother Yaropolk, 24.

— and Yaropolk, both demand the hand of the daughter of Rogvolode, prince of Poltefk, who makes choice of Yaropolk, 25; attacks the prince of Potolsk, whom, with his two sons, he kills, and marries the princess, 26; attacks and takes the town of Kief, *ibid.*; punishes the perfidy of Blude with death, 29; his bold and faithful Varagians urge a tribute on the inhabitants of Kief; he eludes their demands, and, having recovered strength, permits them to embark for Greece, and advises his Byzantine ally to disperse them into various parts of his dominions, 30; his fierce and uncultivated mind, 32; his cruelty in human sacrifices, *ibid.*; his extensive authority, 39; attacks Theodosia, the modern Kassa, 43; his address to the Almighty on that occasion, *ibid.*; Theodosia surrenders, and he becomes master of the whole Cherfonesse, 44; is baptized and marries Anne, sister of the Emperors Basil and Constantine, 45; destroys Peroun their god of thunder, 46; settles the sief of Novgorod on his son, who rebels against him, 50; his death and character, *ibid.*

—, son of Ury, reduced to the habit of a Tatar slave, 83.

— ranked in the calendar of saints, 52.

— taken by the Tatars with horrid cruelty, 83—88; the cathedral burnt, with the the archbishop and the grandees, 89.

Vsevolod, attempts the succour of Kolomna, 82; massacred at the taking of Vladimir, 88.

Walpole, Lord Horatio, anecdote of, 607, note.

War, civil and foreign, characterized by Lord Bacon, 208, note.

Wilboughby, Sir Henry, his Voyage for discoveries, 258; himself and crew perished in the bay of the river Azina in Russian Lapland, *ibid.*

Wucheraft, many persons suspected of, are burnt, 76.

Yaropolk, son of Sviatoflaf, invades his brother Olof's dominions, which become the fruits of his victory, 23; he and Vladimir both demand the hand of the daughter of Rogvolode, prince of Poltefk, who makes choice of Yaropolk, 25; submits to the mercy of Vladimir, but was assassinated by his Varagians, 27.

Taraslaf Vladimirovitch, summons the Germans to his aid, 104; carries desolation to Novgorod, and seizes on Pleskof, 105.

Taraslaf obtains the fief of Novgorod of his father Vladimir, and rebels against him, 50; his design to destroy the city of Riga, opposed by the citizens of Pleskof, 75; grasps the sceptre of his brother, 95; overthrows the Lithuanians, 102; submits to the Tatars, 106.

Tury the second, his character, 60; his careless security, 80; sends assistance too late to the city of Riazan, 82; calls forth his dormant courage, 90; is killed in the moment when his success was doubtful, and the Russians vanquished, *ibid.*

Zingis, Emperor of the Monguls and Tatars, progress of his arms, 61; his lieutenants take the city of Shamakee, *ibid.*

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